CHRISTIANITY AND MODERNISM

BY THE
REVEREND
FRANCIS J. HALL, D.D.
GENERAL THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY NEW YORK

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
MAY 5 1925
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Division BT
Section 88.5
.H344

CHRISTIANITY AND MODERNISM

BY

FRANCIS J. HALL, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY IN THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK

"The Truth Shall Make You Free"

NEW YORK

EDWIN S. GORHAM

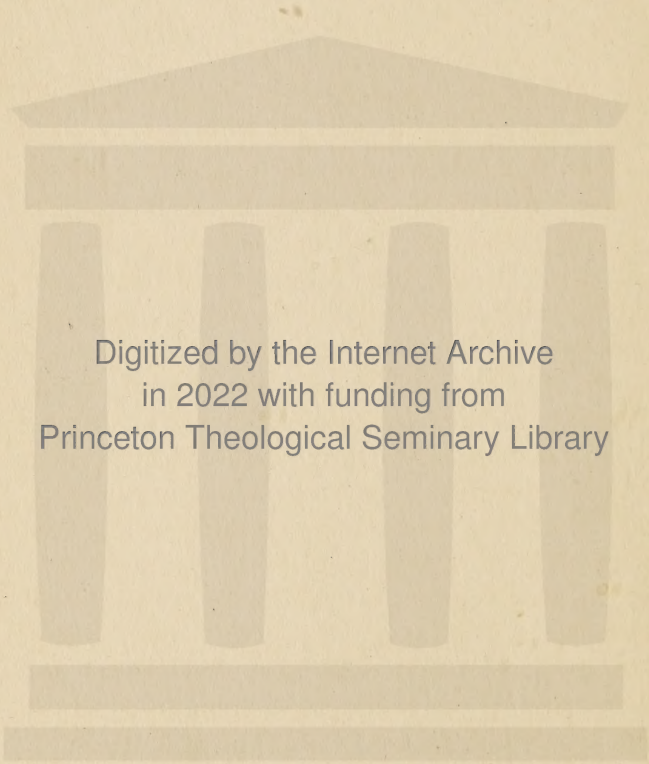
11 WEST 45TH STREET

1924

COPYRIGHT
BY
EDWIN S. GORHAM
1924

THE VAIL-BALLOU PRESS
BINGHAMTON AND NEW YORK

Dedicated
To the Memory of the Faithful
Of all the Ages


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

https://archive.org/details/christianitymode00hall

PREFACE

In his recently published little volume, *What is Modernism?* Dr. Leighton Parks has given a description of that movement, of its aims and of its arguments in matters now under controversy, which is gravely misleading, although unintentionally so, I am sure. He does not appear to have grasped the fundamentally anti-evangelical standpoint and animus of the Modernist movement; and just because his own spirit and motives are transparently loyal, his book, charmingly written, is likely to deceive those of his readers who are not sufficiently and correctly informed. The book seems to require a reply: and I have been urged to make such reply by responsible persons whose judgment I respect.

Partly in direct terms, and partly by incidental statements and allusions, Dr. Parks raises many questions, and to deal with them all in detail *seriatim* would require a very large volume—a wearisome one for the readers who ought to be reached. Moreover, as I shall explain in due course, the battle is really due to standpoints, to mutually incompatible presuppositions and outlooks. When

these are adequately understood, many of Dr. Parks' questions answer themselves, and the rest become easier to handle. Again, I am unwilling to embark in the personal controversy with Dr. Parks which might be involved in discussing the details of his book. I have much respect for his personal character and motives, and I believe him to be loyal hearted.

I prefer, therefore, not to make my book a reply to his, but to adopt a method which I believe will be both more helpful to my readers—that of explaining genetically and fundamentally the real origin, presuppositions and aims of Modernism, with so much attention to the specific issues raised by the movement as the recent outburst seems to call for. In pursuing this method I shall incidentally be meeting what is really significant in the contentions not only of Dr. Parks but of several other recent writers in this Church.[1]

The subject is of course complex, and I cannot hope that every part of my book will be easy reading. I have striven, however, to be as clear as I can; for I wish to reach all classes of intelligent readers, lay as well as clerical, who are fair-minded, and are willing to study the conservative as well as

[1] For example: Bishop William Lawrence, *Fifty Years;* E. S. Drown, *The Creative Christ;* Seven Professors of Cambridge, *Creeds and Loyalty;* Frederic Palmer, *The Virgin Birth;* etc.

the Modernist position. I have also aimed to avoid invidious personalities and other faults of temper associated with what is called the *odium theologicum*. But I ask my readers not to confuse earnest contention for the faith with such faults. The faith is that by which we live, and its earnest defence is a branch of Christian duty.

It is easy for insufficiently informed Christians to infer that, because Modernists argue very aggressively for open-mindedness, and interpret their movement as a reaction against the "closed mind," therefore they are peculiarly open-minded. But open-mindedness here should mean sympathetic readiness *to take pains to understand* both sides of the controversy. One who takes Modernist descriptions of the conservative position as final is not doing this. He is hearing only one side, and is resting in caricature. The mind thus closed is not only misled. It is unfair to historical Christianity. And the truth of what I am saying is not at all reduced when I acknowledge the undeniable fact that victims of the closed mind are also to be found among conservatives. To determine the relative number of such victims in the mutually opposed groups, however, is a hopeless and entirely useless task. My point is that, if Modernists are sincerely desirous to be open-minded, they cannot fulfil their desire until they study the conservative position

more seriously than they have hitherto given evidence of doing.

Apart from details discussed in this book, three outstanding reasons may be mentioned as justifying the alarm felt because of the Modernist propaganda within the Church.

(*a*) The first is the truly anti-Christian and subversive nature of the presuppositions which control the Modernist argument. Even those professed Modernists who would reject them in any clearly stated form, are employing methods of argument which have no validity and no discoverable basis except that of the naturalistic philosophy and a reduced conception of Christ's Person. Modernism calls itself a mental attitude rather than a doctrine, but its presuppositions necessarily make it hostile to several central doctrines of the historic Christian faith. A papal pronouncement describes Modernism as "the synthesis of all heresies." This is misleading, for some professed Modernists appear to retain the chief articles of the faith. But in retaining them, they are inconsistent, and occupy what can only be regarded as an unstable position. The Modernist premises do not admit of acceptance of the supernatural elements of Church doctrine at all. In short, whatever else may be said of it, real Modernism is not in line with Christianity. So far as it is religious, it is a new religion.

(*b*) A second reason is the visible hostility of Modernists to the Church's propaganda, and their open attempt to break down the ecclesiastical provisions for its maintenance. Heresy is being glorified, and defence of the "given" faith is crudely identified with a "closed mind." The Church is charged with heresy-hunting—a grotesque accusation in view of recent history. The aim in view appears to be not simply to promote wise discretion in discipline, but to make it impossible for the Church to employ any discipline with reference to clerical departures from the creeds, however glaring and defiant.

(*c*) A third reason is the result of the Modernist propaganda on the minds of simple folk, the untrained masses. A rationalistic scholarship is made a substitute for the Church's witness to the revealed faith; and the pretentiousness and skilful publicity of Modernist orators and writers is calculated completely to deceive, at least to unsettle, those who through lack of intellectual training and competence are inclined to be convinced by the loudest voices. And Modernist voices are very loud—the newspapers repeat and "amplify" what is most novel and subversive, ignoring orthodox utterances as not constituting "news." It is very sad indeed; and the certainty that Modernism will be short-lived, giving way to some new movement, does not alter

the gravity of the situation. The Church, indeed, has "chronic vitality," and will survive with unchanged faith this onslaught, as it has survived its predecessors. None the less, it is by the agency of its loyal defenders that the Holy Spirit saves the Church from each successive attack, whether from without or from within.

I have tried to make my footnotes and references as brief and as few as possible, for my aim is constructive and defensive rather than academic. Scholarly annotating would also distract many of those whom I hope to reach. This, along with my desire to avoid *personal* controversy, will explain why I have not more frequently given specific references to the writers whose arguments I am answering in given cases.

I wish gratefully to acknowledge valuable suggestions in details from Professors Edmunds and Easton of the General Seminary and Dr. S. P. Delany. They are, of course, not responsible for the use I have made of their help.

CONTENTS

I	PREFACE	v
CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE RISE OF THE MODERN MIND	1
	1. The Ancient Mind	1
	2. Seeds of Trouble	3
	3. The Anglican Mind	5
	4. Modern Factors	6
	5. The Resulting Modern Mind	11
II.	THE BATTLE OF STANDPOINTS	13
	1. The Parties Involved	13
	2. Protestant Liberalism	15
	3. Fundamentalism	17
	4. Ecclesiastical Modernism	18
	5. Conservatism	21
	6. Opposed Presuppositions	22
III.	THE CASE OF "EVERYMAN"	25
IV.	RECENT EVENTS	31
	1. The Attack	31
	2. The Resulting Reaction	33
	3. The Pastoral	34
	4. Modernist Rejoinders	36
	5. Conservative Action	37
V.	THE ISSUES RAISED	39
	1. Preliminary Issues	39
	2. Issues as to the Creed	40
	3. Specific Doctrinal Issues	41

CHAPTER PAGE

VI. Criticisms of the Pastoral 43
1. Its Canonical Regularity 43
2. Its Language 46
3. Two of Its Assertions 47

VII. Natural Science and the Creeds . . 50
1. Scientific Results Helpful to Faith . 50
2. The Limits of Natural Science . . . 52
3. Naturalism is not Science 55
4. The Attack on Miracles 57
5. The Real Meaning and Place of Miracles 60
6. Tests of Credibility 64

VIII. Biblical Criticism 66
1. The Nature and Origin of the Bible . 66
2. The Growth of Bibliolatry 68
3. Biblical Criticism and Its Results . . 71
4. Critical Blunders 74

IX. Faith and Scholarship 77
1. Faith and the Faith 77
2. The Part of Christian Scholarship . . 79
3. The Present State of Scholarship . . 81

X. Faith and Freedom 83
1. Mutually Interacting Principles . . 83
2. Responsibility 84
3. Freedom 86

XI. Ecclesiastical Responsibility . . . 89
1. Bases of Argument 89
2. Propagandist Function of the Church . 92
3. Conditions of Membership 96
4. Ministerial Requirements 98
5. Clerical Discipline 103

CHAPTER PAGE

XII. The Catholic Creeds 107

1. Modernist View of Them 107
2. Their Development 107
3. Their Purpose 109
4. Some Characteristic Aspects . . . 111

XIII. Interpretation of the Creeds . . . 113

1. The Modernist Plea 113
2. Fixed and Progressive Interpretation . 115
3. Symbolical Interpretation 118
4. Unchanged Meaning of the Creed . . 121

XIV. The Full Godhead of Christ . . . 129

1. The Nicene Doctrine 129
2. Anticipated in the New Testament . . 130
3. "Different Gates to One Faith" . . 134

XV. The Virgin Birth 140

1. Standpoints 140
2. State of the Question 144
3. The Evidence 147
4. Objections 151
5. Importance 162

XVI. The Bodily Resurrection of Christ . 168

1. The Christian Doctrine 168
2. Modern Reaction 169
3. Matter and Spirit 171

CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF THE MODERN MIND

1. *The Ancient Mind*

THE first Christians are described as continuing "stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers." [1] They were certain that they had received from Christ and His Holy Spirit a body of saving truths and an authoritative ecclesiastical society and sacramental machinery for preserving and propagating these truths and for practically applying them to the overcoming of sin and the attainment of eternal life with God. They had their problems, but these were practical rather than theoretical. And they were not truth-seekers *so much as* converted to the truth, which they were confident they had received once for all. And they were certain that the truths, institutions and precepts which they had received were permanently valid, adaptable to all mankind, and not open to substantial change to the end of time. Their corporate worship was the Holy

[1] Acts ii, 42.

Eucharist, around which all their religious life was organized.

In the patristic age, the primitive faith had to be translated into the terms of gentilic, especially Greek, thought; and in thus translating certain Christian teachers made substantial changes in this faith. The Church was therefore forced to protect the faithful by authoritative definitions, especially in connection with the Person of Christ and its trinitarian background. As an outcome of this process, the original "form of sound words," [2] probably based upon the baptismal formula, was developed into various local creeds, and these in turn into the so-called Apostles' and Nicene creeds. These two creeds were generally accepted as correctly defining certainties that had been handed down from the Apostles in all the Churches, and on this ground have been retained by a vast majority of Christians to the present day. What is called "the modern mind," being a novelty, has gained impressive publicity. It constitutes "news." But it should not be confused with the mind of modern Christians in general, of the silent majority. This mind, even when accepting the assured results of natural science and biblical criticism, is fundamentally conservative; and, as I hope to show in this book, it is in no danger of overthrow.

[2] II Tim. i, 13.

2. *Seeds of Trouble*

While the ancient faith has always stood sure for the faithful and devout within the Catholic Churches, and is quite the most self-coherent and vital factor in the modern Christian situation, seeds of trouble began to be sown at an early date. These consisted partly of human additions to the faith and partly of practical abuses and corruptions.

(*a*) In no age can men believe the doctrines of the Christian creed without putting them into the mental context of their existing knowledge, real or fancied, and their opinions, on other subjects. Moreover, the boundary line between these doctrines and this wider context is certain to become faint, and articles of the faith come to be understood popularly as including what are really extraneous human ideas and inferences. With the growth of scientific knowledge, however, many of these ideas are abandoned by educated men, and there emerges an appearance of contradiction between the ancient Christian creed and science. But careful study shows that this appearance is misleading, and that the contradiction is really between old and new science—the old science having been mistakenly treated as part of the ancient creed. Such is the true explanation of the so-called warfare between science and religion that began late in the

middle ages. This warfare has sloughed off many theological opinions; but, as I hope to show, it has left the ancient faith standing in its original integrity. In the meantime, however, many souls have been confused and led away from the faith.

(*b*) The abuses and corruptions which caused the Protestant revolution of the sixteenth century began their perceptible growth in the fourth century, when the Church came to be patronized by the state and great throngs of half converted and unconverted pagans flocked into its membership. Civil powers and responsibilities and much wealth came to the episcopal hierarchy, and secular ambition gradually corrupted the ecclesiastical administration. The outcome in the Western Church was the development of the mediæval papal system, having its centre in Rome and self-defensively opposed to reform.

The need of reformation was intensified by the invasion of pagan ideas and practices that naturally resulted from the wholesale method of admission into the Church, above mentioned. The Church's missionaries did, indeed, try to impart Christian meanings to these new elements, but with very imperfect success.[3] Thus it came to pass that, while the ancient Catholic system remained in its integrity,

[3] The idea of *hunting up* pagan ritual for the improvement of Christian practice was, of course, quite unknown until recently.

it had become encrusted with alien elements that seriously reduced its spiritual power.

In the fifteenth century, earnest efforts were made to bring about reformation of the Church in head and members. These efforts were defeated by the Papal See, and many became convinced that revolt from papal jurisdiction was the only possible method of reformation. This revolt came in the sixteenth century. Except in the English Church, it resulted in a revolution that involved repudiation of Catholic authority and of vital elements in the Catholic system, erection of the Bible as the sole source and rule of the faith, and assertion of the supremacy of enlightened private judgment in interpreting Scripture.

3. *The Anglican Mind*

On the other hand, the English Church adhered to the aim of mere reformation, upon the avowed basis of appeal to Catholic antiquity. Its leaders had imperfect knowledge of this antiquity, and their opposition to whatever they thought—not always truly—to be distinctively Roman has left important traces in Anglicanism. But under providential overruling the English Church retained, and transmitted to its daughter Churches, the essential elements of the ancient Catholic system—the creeds, ministry, liturgy,

and sacramental system and discipline. Its implicit rule of faith is to receive the teaching of the Church as illustrated and confirmed by the Scriptures. The Bible is accepted as the Word of God, and as containing all necessary doctrine; but the Church is acknowledged to have authority in controversies of faith, and in this relation, therefore, to be the interpreter of Scripture. Accordingly, the persuasion which is required of those who would become official ministers of the Church's propaganda is that its prescribed doctrines and creed are susceptible of confirmation by Scripture, and are faithfully to be taught to the congregation.

It should be clear that the consequent mind of this Church, its *official* mind, is found neither in passing movements nor in the opinions of momentary leaders. It is given in what the Church abidingly *prescribes* in its Book of Common Prayer, and in the provable implications of these prescriptions.[4]

4. *Modern Factors*

The Protestant Revolution has had effects of far-reaching nature, unforeseen by its promoters. And either directly or indirectly the causes or historic

[4] I have treated more fully of the Anglican mind in *Introd. to Dogm. Theol.*, ch. vii; and *Authority, Eccles. and Biblical*, pp. 143–149, where refs. are given.

factors that explain what is called "the modern mind" can be traced back to it.[5]

(*a*) *Protestant Bibliolatry.* As I shall show in a later chapter, while the ancient Church canonized Holy Scripture as the Word of God, and appealed to the Bible for confirmation and illustration of its own teaching, it did not treat Scripture as the *source* of the faith, nor did it give official sanction to theories concerning the inspiration of the sacred writers. Many came to infer from their inspiration that these writers were wholly inerrant, but this was not ecumenical doctrine.[6] The new Protestant orthodoxy, however, linked together this belief in biblical inerrancy with the contention that the Bible is the sole source and rule of the faith. This naturally enhanced the unsettling effect of the subsequent disproof by science and biblical criticism of the inerrancy of biblical writers.

(*b*) *The supremacy of private judgment* in the interpretation of Scripture, as against ecclesiastical authority, a onesided exaggeration of previously neglected truth, while it became in part an emancipating factor fruitful in intellectual progress, also set free a destructive individualism. It increased

[5] A. C. McGiffert, in *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas,* gives an illuminating account of these factors from the Liberal standpoint.

[6] Although emerging in Roman discipline and recent papal pronouncements. Cf. Galileo.

the loss of the common Christian mind inculcated in the New Testament, and has had destructive effect upon Protestant orthodoxy.

(*c*) *Multiplied Confessions of Faith.* Their imposition was logically inconsistent with the Protestant conception of private judgment, but represented a surviving remnant of belief in the need of corporate witness. None the less, these confessions were mutually discordant in important articles; and the result of their imposition was to produce a babel of rival dogmas which has had destructive effect upon the authority of all doctrinal formularies and creeds.

(*d*) *Natural science* has attained to no results that are inconsistent with the substance of the ancient Catholic faith. But its overthrow of certain ancient conceptions of nature which, as I have already shown, materially affected the popular understanding of certain Christian doctrines, has seemed to many to make uncertain the validity of ancient doctrine in general. And this applies in particular to the conceptions of creation supposed by Protestant orthodoxy to be involved in acceptance of the Bible as the Word of God. Beside all this, the successes of natural science, and the vast enlargement of knowledge of the visible order which it has achieved, have upset the mental perspectives of many. The necessary limita-

tions of science have been overlooked; and the thoroughly unscientific philosophy of naturalism has created, even in those who disclaim acceptance of it, a form of thought or mental temper which is often fatal to belief in the supernatural and miraculous. The effect of this on men's acceptance of the Catholic creeds is of course destructive. I shall enlarge upon this later.

(*e*) *Biblical criticism,* especially during the past century, has been productive of results of great value, and has incidentally discredited completely the inference of Protestant orthodoxy that because the Bible is the Word of God it is therefore an inerrant source of final information on all subjects of which it speaks. Biblical criticism has also brought into clear relief the uneven spiritual quality of Scripture, the necessity of applying the historical method to its interpretation, and its unsuitability to be the sole source and rule of the faith. These results are gradually helping believers to use the Bible more intelligently and more effectively for its divinely intended purpose. But many biblical critics have been controlled by rationalistic and naturalistic presuppositions, and this has led them to destructive conclusions which are vitiated by their premises. Accordingly, their efforts to eliminate the supernatural from the Gospel narratives have overreached and defeated themselves in the judgment of an increas-

ing number of sane critics. None the less the pretentious claims and evident skill of negative criticism have had influence in unsettling many Christian minds.

(*f*) *The study of comparative religion* has also been helpful when sanely pursued—especially in proving the hidden guidance of God vouchsafed to the heathen world, on the one hand, and the supreme truth and finality for all of Christianity, on the other hand. But like biblical criticism it has been exploited rationalistically, with the result that the discovery of measures of truth in every religion has been thought by many to weaken the exclusive claims of Christianity—its supernatural basis, unique authority and finality.

(*g*) *Critical Philosophy,* initiated by Descartes and developed by Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hamilton, Mansel, Spencer and others, has impugned the trustworthiness of the human mind as an instrument of knowledge of the divine. And a distinctly sceptical element is to be found in many recent Protestant writers, notably in the Ritschlian view that religious doctrines are judgments of value rather than of objective truth.

A significant outcome has been a considerable abandonment of concern about the other world, and the substitution of a species of utilitarian idealism,

having exclusive reference to human interests. To make this world a decent and comfortable place to live in, and unselfishly to promote the individual and social happiness and welfare of men here and now, this, or something like it, is being proclaimed as real Christianity and real religion.[7] We hear it said that the Church, with its creeds and sacraments, has failed; and that there is more religion outside the Churches than within them.

5. *The Resulting Modern Mind*

The mixed state of mind or mental attitude that has gradually developed among those who have been controlled by the factors above summarized is what is meant by the current phrase "the modern mind." It is not a doctrine but a mental attitude and outlook. It has doctrinal effect, but of the negative kind. That is denials of traditional doctrine are congenial to it. It is sometimes loud in demanding reconstruction; but does not construct—certainly not on lines that engage consent.

Its victims, many of them, are notably honest, sincere and scholarly truth-seekers, but often seem unhappily to substitute the exercise of seeking for

[7] I have discussed this fully in "This Miserable and Naughty World," in *Anglican Theol. Review,* Oct. 1920.

finding and accepting. In fact, they are very apt to regard any one's assurance of having found truth as evidence of narrowness—of "the closed mind."

Its leading forms will be exhibited in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE BATTLE OF STANDPOINTS

1. *The Parties Involved*

THE religious scholarship of our time is divided into mutually opposed schools; and the consensus of experts is confined to matters which, important as they are for sound learning, do not affect the truth of the ancient Catholic creeds. Those whose knowledge of current scholarship is derived from the loudest voices and from the newspapers are misled in this matter. They gain the impression that real scholars are now agreed in this at least, that the traditional faith of the creeds requires important modification, if it is to be harmonized with modern knowledge.

The purpose of this book is to show that this is not the case. The fact is that "Liberal" and "Modernist" scholars are disagreed positively and combatively in important regards. Their concord is confined to matters lying outside Christian fundamentals, and to an outlook that induces in them a "closed mind" towards traditional doctrine, especially towards its supernatural elements.

Many people assume that expert scholarship must in the long run reach common and assured results in matters of religious doctrine. For reasons to be discussed later, this is not the case. It is sufficient for the present to say, that scholarship, even at its best, is determined in its conclusions by its original assumptions or presuppositions, and these presuppositions are peculiarly difficult to change in religious enquiry. Furthermore, success in religious truth-seeking is controlled by the law that spiritual things are spiritually examined;[1] and scholarly expertness is incompetent in this examination, unless the scholar has been converted, and has humbly submitted to the laws of enlightenment by grace.

I am convinced of the scholarly acumen of many Liberals and Modernists. I also have come to know that traditional doctrine is accepted and defended by a vast array of competent scholars; and I am not disturbed in this knowledge either by assertions to the contrary or by the fact, already explained, that scholarship of the traditional type fails to gain the publicity which is secured by that of the innovating kind. These two scholarships disagree vitally in their results; and the most visible cause of this is an opposition of original presuppositions and standpoints.

In brief, the present controversy is not correctly

[1] I Cor. ii, 11–14.

described as between scholarly and unscholarly groups, but as a *battle of standpoints.* In Protestant bodies the standpoints involved are those of Liberalism and Fundamentalism. Within Catholic communions, including our own, the battle lies between the standpoints of Modernism and Catholic conservatism, Modernism being in some ways akin to Liberalism, but in important regards quite distinct. Much confusion has arisen in America from failure to distinguish these standpoints and to perceive that there are two battles going on, not one only.

2. *Protestant Liberalism*

Protestant Liberalism [2] owes its development and principles chiefly to German rationalism. It reflects the influence of Kant's critical philosophy, of rationalistic and negative biblical criticism, of Schleiermacher's emphasis on experience, and of the Ritschlian view that the validity of religious doctrines lies in their being judgments of value. Christ, Ritschl said, has the value of God for our religious consciousness; but whether He is actually pre-existent God, we cannot know. Its current form is chiefly due to the work of Adolf Harnack of Berlin.[3]

[2] Carefully described by O. C. Quick, *Liberalism, Modernism and Tradition,* Lec. i.

[3] Cf. his *What is Christianity?*

In its full development private judgment gains complete sway, as against both biblical and ecclesiastical authority. There is no rule of faith except that of experience and unfettered scientific scholarship. The Bible, as reduced by negative criticism, contains records of genuine experience which call for careful study by the historical method, but this experience has now been transcended. Science is supreme, and the miraculous does not happen. The Kingdom of God is earthly human society, progressively moralized on the lines of efficient utilitarian idealism.

Acknowledging that the essentials of Catholicism are found in St. Paul, Harnack rejects them, and harks "back to the historical Jesus," by which he means the Jesus of an emasculated and naturalistic version of the Synoptic Gospels, to the exclusion of both apostolic Christianity and Old Testament prophecy. On this basis he makes the essence of Christianity to be an ethic, grounded in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and issuing in development in this world of the Kingdom of God, in the sense above indicated. The Christ of traditional dogma is rejected. His divinity is admitted in terms, but the meaning is that the godlikeness, which is potential in all men, is most perfectly realized in Him. His Godhead is purely ethical. To be a true Christian is simply to take

Christ as ethical Master in unselfish promotion of human welfare and happiness *in this world.*

The English and American Liberals rarely exhibit the thoroughgoing consistency of the Germans. But, as various addresses at the Girton Conference of 1921 [4] and numerous other productions show, the lines of their argument are clearly pointed towards, and reach their logical completion in, Harnack's standpoint.

The radical nature of that standpoint, and its hopeless disagreement with historical Christianity, seem very clear. And the idea of God itself is reduced to an abstraction—mere goodness, in the form of idealistic efficiency for a comfortable world. The worship of Christ becomes pagan Jesuolatry.

3. *Fundamentalism*

Fundamentalism represents a recoil from Liberalism on the part of Protestants who seek to retain the orthodoxy of Protestant confessionalism. Dr. Straton of New York is a militant pulpit supporter, and Mr. William J. Bryan an eminent lay defender.

It insists upon the inerrancy of biblical writers, and rejects important scientific conclusions as contrary to the Word of God. In particular, it is at war with the scientific doctrine of evolution, and de-

[4] Published in *The Modern Churchman,* Sept. 1921.

fends the historic reality of all the miracles recorded in both Testaments.

The strength of the Protestant reaction against Liberalism has surprised many; but it does not indicate that rigid Fundamentalism, as above described, is accepted by all who train with the Fundamentalists in the present conflict. Many of them have been influenced to a degree in their views by modern knowledge. But they agree with Dr. Machen of Princeton that "Liberalism" has gone far beyond the acceptance of scientific results, and has reached a standpoint which is hopelessly opposed to Christianity in all its genuine forms.[5] Real Fundamentalists are the extremists among the Protestants who are fighting Liberalism; and, in rejecting established modern knowledge upon the basis of a highly precarious inference from biblical inspiration, they weaken rather than help the cause of Protestant orthodoxy. They seem to be fighting for a lost cause.

4. *Ecclesiastical Modernism*

Modernism [6] was born in the Roman Communion, and grew out of various efforts to reconcile papal allegiance with the modern mind and with scientific

[5] See his *Christianity and Liberalism.*
[6] On which, O. C. Quick, *op. cit.,* Lec. ii.

and critical knowledge and thought. It was given challenging expression by A. Loisy's *The Gospel and the Church* (1902), and was met by papal condemnation in 1907, followed by disciplinary measures which soon drove it into hiding.

The arguments of Loisy and of the English George Tyrrell,[7] and their tragic experiences, drew the sympathetic attention of various Anglican scholars. Their own Anglican ministry raised a problem similar to that of Roman Catholic Modernists, the problem of reconciling allegiance to the Catholic creeds and other Catholic elements retained in the Anglican Church with an innovating standpoint. They developed a Modernism which is analogous to that of the Roman Modernists, although somewhat softened and adjusted to Anglican conditions. From England it has invaded the American Episcopal Church, losing in this migration some, not all, of its coherence and clear distinctness from Liberalism.

Modernism substitutes fruitful ideas for given Gospel facts as the basis of Christianity, and the progressive development of these ideas for the authoritative origin of a sacred and unalterable deposit of faith and order. As with Liberalism, natural human experience and scientific scholarship are emphasized, but with a significant difference. Liberal-

[7] *Lex Orandi,* 1903; *A Much-Abused Letter,* 1907; *Mediævalism,* 1908, etc.

ism grounds all in similar individual experiences leading to organized Christianity; whereas Modernism puts the Church first as the condition and sphere of normal Christian experience, which it treats as primarily social and organic. The late Josiah Royce's conception of "the beloved community" is analogous to this, except in not identifying the "community" with the historic Catholic Church.[8]

Behind Modernism is the evolutionary philosophy, and the theory that the Incarnation is neither one event nor confined to Jesus Christ, but is a long process by which God actualizes and finds Himself in developing mankind. And Christianity is to be described as something that is ever becoming, never a static thing. What it once was it has outgrown, and it is becoming what as yet it is not. Catholic creeds and dogmas are significant memorials of past stages of Christian evolution. As such, like the Scriptures, they are rightly retained; but they are not to be accepted as valid for present belief, except as subjected to evolutionary and symbolical interpretation. It is asserted that even the most conservative believers no longer accept the articles of the creed in their original sense, and that since evolutionary change of meaning is an established law of the Church's interpretation of them, symbolical interpretation is entirely consistent with ministerial

[8] *The Problem of Christianity,* 2 vols.

pledges of conformity to the Church's doctrine. This and other details of the Modernist argument will be reckoned with later.

5. *Conservatism*

Conservatism among us falls back on the Anglican reformation appeal to antiquity and on the Church's official Book of Common Prayer. It regards Christianity as forever determined by the self-manifestation, redemptive work, teaching and prescriptions, doctrinal, ethical and institutional, of Jesus Christ, very God Incarnate, completed and embodied by His Holy Spirit in His apostolic Church. Christianity is rooted in adoring loyalty to the divine Person of Jesus Christ; and its necessary and abiding elements consist of what was received once for all from Him and His Holy Spirit in the first century.

Having thus received these things, the Church holds itself bound permanently to preserve and administer them for the eternal welfare of mankind. The resulting Catholic creeds are believed to affirm correctly such elements of the original Christian faith as experience has shown to be in need of such formal affirmation and prescription. If we distinguish between what the creeds themselves really affirm and the mental context of ancient believers

which many have read into them, we find that their articles retain their original meaning, and in that meaning still have authority in the Church, in particular over the Church's official teachers. Such is the position, implicit at least even when not precisely defined, which seems to determine the standpoint of the silent majority of Episcopalians; and it has been mightily fortified by the so-called Catholic movement—at present quite the most powerful movement in the Anglican Communion.

6. *Opposed Presuppositions*

The notion that men can study vital subjects entirely without bias, that is without being influenced by previous assumptions, is not so generally accepted as it used to be. Borrowing a thought recently expressed by President Butler, a mind that is open "at both ends" can retain nothing. A mental background, some previous state of conviction, however rudimentary, which will control the interpretation of experience is essential for intelligent study. A really empty and opinionless mind is incompetent for scholarly work. Real scholarship starts with assumptions, although its value depends upon its clear recognition of its assumptions, upon fearless facing of all experience, and upon readiness to modify or even to abandon such assumptions as are found to

be inconsistent with fuller knowledge. "The modern mind" is controlled by one group of assumptions; while the conservative mind, whether Protestant or Catholic, is controlled by another. So long as this is the case, mutual agreement in the matters now in controversy is impossible. Scholarship is found on both sides; but, apart from other requirements yet to be considered, common results can be reached only through reconsideration of initial assumptions. The battle, intellectually considered, is one of standpoints.

The standpoint of historical Christianity is rooted in acceptance of the supernatural, of a specific and miraculous manifestation of God in history, and of the eternal, inherent and full possession by our Lord of the unique and indivisible Godhead. The standpoint of "the modern mind" is determined by the assumption that genuine miracles are intrinsically incredible, especially such miracles as the Virgin Birth and the bodily Resurrection of Christ; and by an exclusively human conception of Christ's earthly life that necessarily involves destructive treatment of the Gospel evidences of His personal claims. Out of this opposition of initial assumptions grows the whole welter of current controversy. "The modern mind" claims to have scientific scholarship wholly on its side. It accuses the conservative of having a "closed mind" and of being at

war with science. Intelligent conservatives reject both this claim and this accusation. They repudiate the scientific validity of the Modernist's naturalism, and find that "the modern mind" is itself "closed" to any just consideration of the Christian doctrines which it assails.

CHAPTER III

THE CASE OF EVERYMAN

"EVERYMAN" is a symbolical name for one who is no more and no less intelligent than the vast majority of his neighbours, and who is subject to the normal difficulties and temptations that beset our race. He has his own individual conditions, aptitudes and limitations; but on the whole he is just human. His case calls for careful consideration by those who would help him.

He is created for God, and so made that enjoyment of the relations with God and His other children wherein eternal life consists can alone really satisfy him. But he is sinful, and sinfulness is fatal to the satisfaction of this need. His supreme need, therefore, is to obtain deliverance from sin—including not only divine forgiveness, but entire emancipation from sin's enslaving power. He has other problems, and is apt to regard such of them as affect his temporal welfare and happiness as most important.

This mistaken judgment is due to the spiritual blindness which sin has inflicted upon mankind; and

many ages of experience confirm the conclusion that, if carnal utilitarianism is to give way to a justly proportionate estimate of problems and to an enlightened and effective pursuit of eternal life, this must be the result of superhuman teaching and help, believingly and penitently received. Moreover, when Everyman thus learns what his supreme problem is, and what is "the way" to its solution, all his other problems become endurable, even if their solution is wanting, for they are seen to disappear with the attainment of eternal life.

Christ has brought immortality to light by revealing eternal life and "the way" thereto. And the faith which has been given to the Church to propagate affords the light by which alone Everyman can discern "this way." The Catholic creeds embody it in terms that he can sufficiently appropriate, even though he neither can solve, nor needs to solve, the academic problems which they suggest to intellectuals. If Everyman is to appropriate this faith, it must above all things be presented positively, clearly and with confident assurance. This is so because he is by nature peculiarly susceptible to such methods of propaganda; and in things that man cannot discover for himself, but needs to know, he depends upon competent, authoritative and unambiguous teaching.

The Church was established and commissioned

to give just such teaching; and long experience shows that one does not need to accept any theory of ecclesiastical infallibility in order to discover that *by practicing the obedience of faith* in submission to the laws of life prescribed in the Church he can attain *sufficient* spiritual knowledge and guidance to enter into life eternal. This is what really matters.

The sadness of the present situation lies in the sophistication of modern intellectuals. They have enveloped the clear elements of Christian teaching in a maze of insoluble problems, which they treat as reasons for doubting the credibility of Christian certainties. The causes of this phenomenon I have indicated above, and I hope to show that neither Liberalism nor Modernism are taking the right road to the truth—the truth, I mean, that pertains to eternal life. The point which I am now making is that these movements and standpoints perplex Everyman instead of guiding him into life.

Liberals and Modernists instinctively imitate the dogmatic method of the Church which they assail, and their voices are very loud, therefore impressive to the untrained Everyman. The newspapers, as I have shown, give prior space to new propaganda, because it constitutes "news," which conservative utterance does not. Current fiction also reflects the substitution of problems for Christian certainties. I am not impugning the mental integrity and honesty

of Modernists when I add that attacks on the Church's faith by those who are pledged to teach it in its integrity manifestly add to the perplexities of Everyman instead of bringing him to the feet of Jesus Christ and to the way of eternal life.

Everyman is said to be profoundly discontented with the Churches. This assertion does not usually come from him, for he is ordinarily not given to self-expression, and indifference rather than discontent is most frequent. It comes from those who are engaged in telling him that he ought to be discontented, no doubt with the effect of making him think that his independence of ecclesiastical affiliation has religious value.

I sympathize greatly with the churchless, not less so because I cannot agree with current ascriptions to them of profound religious earnestness and truly spiritual concern with religious problems. In general, they reveal in saddening forms the universal limitations of men when unenlightened by true Christianity and unconverted to its saving faith and discipline. The rise of churchless Christianity, so-called, is simply a revelation of the fact, often overlooked, that truly converted Christians have for ages constituted only a minority of Church members, the Church-allegiance of the rest being due to influences other than genuine conversion to Christian truth and practice. It is the weakening of these

extraneous influences that is setting the unconverted free from their unreal ecclesiastical allegiance. A sad situation emerges, but not fundamentally new. An old situation is being unveiled—simply that.

It is also becoming clear that the untrained masses have been unconsciously affected by the same historic causes which, as indicated in my first chapter, explain the rise among intellectuals of the "modern mind." And the propaganda of Liberals and Modernists is calculated to persuade the churchless that in abandoning their traditional Christian allegiance they have, unbeknown to themselves, put themselves in the way of becoming more religious. Alas, they have simply shown themselves to be unconverted.

How shall Everyman be converted? Not by solving the passing social and economic problems of our time, although surely competent Churchmen should labour for such solution of them as is possible. Not by promoting his immediate welfare and earthly happiness, although converted Christians cannot consistently fail to go about "doing good." The road of Everyman to conversion lies through his being personally convinced of sin, through his being brought to the knowledge of Christian certainties, and through his being persuaded that believing and penitent adoption of the ancient Christian "Way" opens up the only road out of sin into the life worth living. Plenty of

clear and assured doctrinal teaching is needed, and a propaganda in which the problem of sin is faced and practically solved by conversion, repentance and saving grace. Our clergy need to realize that the problems of scholars are outlying adjuncts which can wait, so far as helping Everyman is concerned; and that he can be saved, whether they are solved or not, only through the penitent obedience of faith and love. Scholarship cannot unearth any new way to eternal life. If loyal, it can help the simple to find the old way. If disloyal, it simply breeds confusion.

CHAPTER IV

RECENT EVENTS

1. *The Attack*

The present controversy within the Episcopal Church was not due to the recent pastoral of the House of Bishops, nor did it originate in any aggression of conservatives. If certain official agents of the Church's propaganda had refrained from publicly ventilating doubts concerning doctrines which their office explicitly pledged them to teach, this trouble would not have arisen. The bishops were not, as has been asserted, the aggressors. Their pastoral was defensive.

The attack began some time ago. In the late Dr. Heber Newton's *Church and Creed* (1891), for example, the Nicene Creed was brought under fire as imposing Greek metaphysic—a contention to be dealt with later—and the practice of progressive interpretation was advocated, as affording relief from literal acceptance of certain articles of the creed. The alarm which the consequent agitation

produced was met by a pastoral issued in 1894 by a committee of bishops appointed to compose and publish it. And, when the unrepresentative nature of this pastoral was objected to, the House of Bishops in the General Convention of 1895 formally ratified it.

Again, in 1906, Dr. A. S. Crapsey of Rochester, New York, having attacked the Nicene Creed on the same lines, and, refusing to yield to his bishop's private admonitions, was tried before his peers in Batavia and convicted of heresy touching the Godhead of Christ, His Virgin Birth and His bodily Resurrection. He appealed, and his conviction was unanimously confirmed by the Court of Review in New York City. The late Dr. William R. Huntington was a member of this court. Dr. Crapsey then renounced his ministry and was deposed on that ground.

During the past couple of years the attacks on the creeds have been resumed, and a non-literal interpretation of the Virgin-Birth and certain other articles has been defended. Finally, the Bishop of Massachusetts has ventured to assure such candidates for the ministry as feel unable sincerely to teach the Virgin Birth as literal fact that they need not think themselves on this account to be unable honestly to make the prescribed ministerial pledges and enter the Church's ministry. He has also laid

some stress on the relative unimportance of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth.[1]

In the meantime the then Rector of the Church of the Ascension, New York City, made a pulpit utterance which seemed to many to imply his personal rejection of the doctrine of the creeds concerning Christ's Person. His bishop then called on him either to remove this impression by definitely orthodox language or to withdraw from the ministry, the conditions of which he could not honestly fulfil. Instead of pursuing this proper course, the rector sent to the bishop an elaborate plea for liberty to disregard such doctrinal restrictions. Inasmuch as he had refused clearly to define his views on the questions at issue, and had used no clearly indictable language, his trial for heresy would have been a vain undertaking, and the bishop suspended further procedure with an explanation to this effect. The rector's prestige has not been enhanced by his cleverness.

2. *The Resulting Reaction*

It was widely felt that some official means should be taken for defence of the Church against what looked like a deliberate movement to nullify the force of its ministerial requirements and its doc-

[1] William Lawrence, *Fifty Years,* pp. 46 ff.

trinal prescriptions. As the House of Bishops was soon to meet in special session, a responsible group of prominent laymen published an appeal to that body for advice and guidance. Such were the provoking causes and the immediate occasion of *A Pastoral Letter,* issued by the House of Bishops sitting in Dallas, Texas, November 14–15, 1923—defined in that letter as "widespread distress and disturbance of mind among many earnest church people, both clerical and lay, caused by several recent utterances concerning the Creeds," also the fact that, "as the Chief Pastors of the Church solemnly pledged to uphold its Faith, we have been formally appealed to by eminent laymen for advice and guidance with regard to the questions thus raised."

3. *The Pastoral*

The bishops begin by saying, We "put forth these words of explanation and, we trust, of re-assurance."

1. The superior importance of "the profession of our *belief in,* i. e. of entire surrender to, the Triune God" is asserted; "but the affirmation of the facts, declared by Scripture and a part of the belief of the Christian Church from the beginning, is of vital importance to faith and life."

2. "The Creeds give and require no explanations of the facts which they rehearse," nor of the Trinity,

the Incarnation, the manner of union of our Lord's natures, and "the *nature* of the resurrection body."

3. "The shorter Apostles' Creed is to be interpreted in the light of the fuller Nicene Creed," etc.

4. The imposition of such a "test of sincere purpose of discipleship" as the Apostles' Creed, along with the other baptismal vows, "is reasonably required for admission to the Christian society."

5. The relevant requirements by which ministerial adherence to the Church's faith is guarded are described. "It is irreconcilable" with the ordination vows "for a minister of this Church to deny, or to suggest doubt as to the facts and truths declared in the Apostles' Creed."

6. "To deny, or to treat as immaterial belief in the Creed" regularly recited in the Church's Service, "is to trifle with words and cannot but expose us to the suspicion and danger of dishonesty and unreality," etc. "To explain away the statement, 'Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,' as if it referred to a birth in the ordinary way, of two human parents, under perhaps exceptionally holy conditions, is plainly an abuse of language," etc.

7. "Objections to the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, or to the bodily Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . have been abundantly dealt with by the best scholarship of the day."

8. "It is not the fact of the Virgin Birth that makes us believe in our Lord as God; but our belief in Him as God makes reasonable and natural our acceptance of the fact . . . as declared in the Scriptures and confessed in the Creed from the earliest times."

9. "The Creed witnesses to the . . . purpose of the Church not to explain but to proclaim the fact that the Jesus of history is none other than God and Saviour," etc.

10. The Creeds do not impose "fetters" on free thought but give "a point of departure" for it. "The Truth is never a barrier to thought," but "makes us free."

4. *Modernist Rejoinders*

The Modernists have been stirred by this pastoral to a series of warm pulpit protests; and various branches of the Modernist argument have been again set forth in several books and pamphlets.[2] They mistakenly allege that the bishops have accused them of personal dishonesty, and to have threatened discipline; they deny the statement that the best scholarship of the day has met the objections to the doctrines of the Virgin Birth and

[2] Reference will be made in due course to the more important ones.

the bodily Resurrection; and they criticize the bishops for issuing such a pastoral under such conditions, some of them treating it as an uncanonical attempt to legislate and to impose new doctrinal requirements.

Along with other lines of attack, they reiterate their arguments for liberty to interpret the creeds symbolically; and while usually avoiding direct and explicit denials, they renew their defence of *the right* to deny the literal facts of the Virgin Birth and bodily Resurrection of our Lord. In this connection, several new attempts have been made to show that neither the evidence for the fact of the Virgin Birth nor its importance, if proved, is sufficient to justify its being imposed as an article of the Christian faith. Some of them are advocating changes in the Prayer Book, designed to release baptismal candidates from acceptance of the Apostles' Creed, and to make the creeds optional in the public services. The New York *Churchman* has converted itself largely into an organ of Modernism; and, as might be expected, the newspapers have chiefly reflected in their columns the Modernist side of the debate.

5. *Conservative Action*

Conservative utterances have been less numerous, and have gained less publicity. *The Living*

Church defends the conservative cause, as does also *the American Church Monthly.* There has been no panic, thanks no doubt to the reassuring effect of the pastoral, but a perceptible increase of positive teaching from the pulpit.

It signifies much in estimating the situation to notice that the Modernist movement, claiming the support of 500 clergy—a very doubtful claim indeed if conscious and specific approval of Modernist negations is meant—is offset by a notable strengthening in recent years of the Catholic movement, necessarily at one with the general body of conservative Churchmen in this controversy. This movement is quite the most powerful one at the present moment in the Anglican Communion, especially in England. And here in America it gave a demonstration at the Priests' Convention in Philadelphia, April 29–30, quite exceeding in extent of immediate support anything that the Modernists can exhibit. In spite of the obstacle that, through inadvertence, the date of the Convention coincided with that of the Church Congress at Boston, and although the Convention extended its invitations only in the Eastern sections of the nation, over 700 priests took part.

CHAPTER V

THE ISSUES RAISED

THE first issue which I intend to discuss in the following chapters stands by itself, and is of the moment only. I refer to the Bishops' Pastoral, its ecclesiastical justification under the circumstances, and the fitness and correct pertinence of its content. The other issues fall under three heads.

1. *Preliminary Issues*

(*a*) There is the claim that natural science has so enlarged and corrected the ancient conceptions of the universe which controlled the early development of Christian doctrine that certain resulting articles of the Catholic creeds, including their miraculous elements, have ceased to be credible among educated men.[1]

(*b*) Related to this is the further claim that scientific biblical criticism has discredited not only the

[1] Cf. Dr. D. S. Miller's word, "that no thoroughly educated man believes in the literal Virgin-Birth." *New Republic,* Mch. 5, 1924.

historical and scientific infallibility of biblical documents in general, but also the textual and historical value of those portions of the Gospels from which the evidence for the doctrines now in controversy is gathered.

(*c*) There should be added the claim of Modernists that real scholarship supports their position, and that the traditional position and arguments reveal hopeless bias and a "closed mind."

2. *Issues as to the Creed*

(*a*) It is contended that apart from some simple expression of personal loyalty to Christ, no doctrinal profession like that of acceptance of the articles of the Apostles' Creed ought to be required for admission to Church membership. The principle that Christians, as such, are under obligation to accept any particular definitions of doctrine is rejected.

(*b*) Entire personal freedom of investigation, conviction and expression of conviction is claimed for Christian scholars, a claim which is not usually disputed by conservatives. But Modernists interpret this freedom as including the right of those who have reached convictions contrary to doctrines in the creed to accept, retain and exercise the Church's official ministry for publicly assailing such doctrines. The issue is not one of personal freedom of thought,

but of responsibility incurred in voluntarily accepting and retaining office in the Church's propaganda.

(*c*) There is also the issue of interpretation. Do the creeds bind in their originally imposed sense? Is what is called "progressive interpretation," especially when it reverses the original meaning of the creeds, permissible to those who profess to accept them loyally?

3. *Specific Doctrinal Issues*

The most prominent ones are three:

(*a*) The doctrine that the Jesus Christ of history has ever been and ever will be in Person the eternal Son of God,—fully possessed of the indivisible Godhead of God the Father. Connected with this is the assertion that the Nicene Creed affirms an antiquated Greek metaphysic; and also certain novel definitions of the Incarnation.

(*b*) The doctrine that our Lord was conceived and born of a virgin, without human paternity, by the special operation of the Holy Spirit, this doctrine being rejected in favour of a symbolical interpretation inconsistent with the fact therein asserted.

(*c*) The doctrine that our Lord rose from the dead and subsequently withdrew into Heaven in the body wherein He was crucified, this body under-

going mysterious change, but remaining a real body. This resurrection, so far as defined to be truly a bodily one, is rejected.

In thus defining the issues, I do not mean to imply that all those who are willing to be called Modernists individually assume in each of them the more radical Modernist positions. None the less, the movement as a whole has certainly raised them, and substantially in the forms which I have described. I believe that the majority of our Episcopal Modernists have failed to realize the revolutionary nature of the cause to which they are lending support, and the very radical significance which their language consequently seems to have to many Churchmen. I think this to be the case, in particular, with the loyal-hearted Dr. Leighton Parks. And no one is a "heretic," properly speaking, who does not explicitly and provably repudiate some formal doctrine of the Church.

CHAPTER VI

CRITICISMS OF THE PASTORAL

I AM here concerned only with such criticisms as have to do with the pastoral itself, its legitimacy, regularity and fitness under the circumstances of its being issued. Criticisms which pertain to issues that are independent of the merits or demerits of the pastoral I discuss elsewhere, in their proper connections.

1. *Its Canonical Regularity*

(*a*) We may safely assume that the objections made by some to the general right of the bishops to issue pastorals were made either in ignorance or under unreflecting impulse. But it may be well to point out that our bishops have the status of "chief pastors" and at their consecration are required to pledge themselves "with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word; and *both privately and openly* to call upon and en-

courage others to do the same" (italics mine). A pastoral letter is plainly a suitable method of doing this "openly," is in accord with apostolic example, and, whether issued by individual bishops within their several jurisdictions or collectively by the House of Bishops to the Church at large, is in full accord with canonically recognized precedents in this Church.

(*b*) The objection that pastorals from the House of Bishops are legitimate only during sessions of the General Convention has no force except on the double assumption that to issue a pastoral is a legislative act, and that no collective action of the bishops, whether legislative or other, is permissible between sessions of the General Convention. Both assumptions are mistaken. A pastoral is not legislative, and neither can, nor pretends to, change the Canon Law of the Church in any particular. It is simply a method by which bishops normally exercise their appointed duty of calling the attention of Churchmen to doctrines and obligations already contained in the Church's legislation. No canons limit the occasions for fulfilling this duty; and inasmuch as the House of Bishops meets from time to time between General Conventions for the transaction of business, this particular business is legitimately attended to at such sessions. And it is not the first time that a pastoral has been issued by the bishops

in special session.[1] Such action is therefore normal.

(*c*) It is objected, however, that no notice of this business was given when the Dallas meeting of the House of Bishops was called, so that it was out of order. Apart from the probability that the issuance of a pastoral by the House of Bishops is always in order when it is gathered in duly constituted session, unless explicitly excluded by the terms of the summons, it is not the rule of the House of Bishops to feel debarred from taking up any business that may normally be presented for its consideration.

(*d*) The fact that a minority only of bishops entitled to attend was present does not nullify its action in this matter unless it nullifies the rest of their proceedings, which no one alleges. A canonical quorum was present after due notice to all, and no canonist will venture seriously to maintain that a quorum ceases to be such because many have absented themselves. The objection that the House was packed with reference to the pastoral has not been made, and is of course incredible. The fact that an important memorial was to be presented, one that would be likely to be answered, if at all, by a pastoral, was known beforehand, and this effectually bars out such an objection. To all this should be added the entire normality of the pastoral

[1] Cf. the Pastoral of 1894.

under the circumstances that called it forth. There was no straining of authority on the part of the bishops. The vote was formally unanimous, and the assertion said to have been made by one bishop (not named), that he would have voted "no" except for lack of courage, is not worth considering. If any widespread disapproval of the pastoral existed among the absent bishops, such disapproval would surely have gained expression before this.

2. *Its Language*

(*a*) The bishops have been charged with making "threats" of discipline towards the Modernists. This is certainly a mistake. It is true that the bishops said, "Among the offences for which he" (a minister) "is liable to be presented for trial is the holding and teaching publicly or privately, and advisedly, doctrine contrary to that of this Church." But the context makes it perfectly clear that they say this simply by way of showing how seriously the Church regards the obligation of its ministers to conform to its doctrine. Their language was didactic. Not one word of threat appears.

(*b*) The Modernists complain that they were accused of personal dishonesty in the pastoral. Again they are quite mistaken. Personal dishonesty means conscious or intentional dishonesty. With entirely

honest intention men sometimes adopt modes of action which none the less are inconsistent with generally recognized external requirements of honesty; and it was with these requirements that the pastoral was concerned. It undertook to remind men of them in relation to the use of creed language. The aspect of mental integrity which Modernists emphasize—of unqualified devotion to truth, wherever it may lead—is of course fundamental, and as a branch of such devotion Modernists, no doubt, have truly persuaded themselves that they can honestly affirm articles of the creed while interpreting them in a sense that really reverses their generally acknowledged meaning. The pastoral does not deny the honesty of their *intention* in doing this. It simply points out what they have failed to realize, that is, that no one can thus empty doctrinal professions of their generally recognized meaning without violating previously accepted standards of honesty, and thereby incurring both "the suspicion and the danger of dishonesty." Most men will agree with the pastoral on this point, and will perceive that the reminder was needed.

3. *Two of its Assertions*

(*a*) Denial has been given to the bishops' assertion that "Objections to the doctrine of the Virgin

Birth, or to the bodily Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . have been abundantly dealt with by the best scholarships of the day"; and the suggestion has been made that our bishops' are not themselves really competent to estimate scholarly work. Pending fuller discussion in another chapter of what is required for scholarly competence in relation to the subjects mentioned, for the present I limit myself to two remarks.

In the first place, our bishops are certainly competent to perceive the patent fact that a very considerable array of writers, widely reputed to be competent scholars, both Catholic and Protestant, have published works in which they reckon, with seeming thoroughness and scholarly temper, with all the data pertaining to the two facts in question, and conclude in favour of their acceptance as facts. Secondly, the initial standpoint of consistent Liberal and Modernist scholars, controlled by the assumption that such miracles *violate* natural causation and are intrinsically incredible, forbids that their investigations, however thorough, should lead to other than negative conclusions as to the historical reality of these events. The battle is one of standpoints, with able scholars on both sides. It is, of course, an objectionable form of dependence upon authority to rest the case finally on appeal to scholars, without ourselves examining their data and arguments; and

in due course I shall try to reckon fairly with them in this book.

(*b*) The bishops truly say, "It is not the fact of the Virgin Birth that makes us believe in our Lord as God; but our belief in Him as God makes reasonable and natural our acceptance of the fact . . . as declared in the Scriptures," etc. This acknowledgment has been taken to show the comparative unimportance of the Virgin Birth, if a fact. Similar language by Bishop Gore had already been similarly misapplied by the Bishop of Massachusetts. The fallacy appears in the premise that the sole importance of the Virgin Birth lies in its being the basis of belief in our Lord's very Godhead, that is, wholly in its evidential aspect. In another chapter I shall present several reasons for acknowledging its importance.

CHAPTER VII

NATURAL SCIENCE AND THE CREEDS

1. *Scientific Results Helpful to Faith*

ALONG with a great number of firm believers in the facts of our Lord's Virgin Birth and bodily Resurrection, I am convinced of the immense value of the results of modern natural science. For many years I have tried to keep abreast of its inspiring work, and have been prepared without reserve to accept any of its results which appear really to be established. In particular, as my volume on *Evolution and the Fall* shows, I consider the evolutionary theory of the origin of organic species to be firmly established in its main lines. And my theological outlook permits the hypothesis that *physical* descent at least from brute ancestry is to be ascribed to the human species. Man is of course what he is, notably superior to all other species, and possessed of unique rational, moral and spiritual attributes and relations, whatever may have been the method of his creation by God, whatever may have been his ancestry.

Although natural science has acknowledged limitations—I shall return to this—and is thereby precluded from determining either the possibility of the miracles affirmed in the Catholic creeds or the truth of the supernaturally revealed doctrines therein asserted, it does none the less afford important service in the *relative* interpretation of Christian articles of faith. By relative interpretation I mean the task of affording a context of sound natural knowledge in which to perceive more and more truly and richly the manifold *bearings* and *applications* of revealed truths. These truths, without being changed in themselves, are more intelligently linked up with other truths and facts; and theology, the progressive human science of divine things, is thereby immensely enriched, and incidentally purged of crude ideas belonging to outgrown stages of natural knowledge. The supernatural facts and mysteries of the Christian faith are relieved of erroneous inferences formerly confused with them. A suspicious attitude towards natural science, rightly developed, is contrary to the interests of a sound and reasonable Catholic theology. I am absolutely sure of this.

It is quite consistent with this, however, that theologians rightly exhibit caution in modifying the changeable elements of their science because of alleged new results of natural science. In the first

place, theological specializing usually precludes expertness in natural science, and makes it necessary for theologians to wait until the new results have firmly established themselves in the general consent of the intelligent. Many an alleged "result" has before long proved to be either erroneous or in need of modification. The nervous up-to-dateness of some theologians towards natural science is amateurish rather than indicative of mature judgment. Accordingly, the fact that theology is apt to be deliberately slow in appropriating the results of natural science is not a just reason for adverse criticism. It is really an inevitable incident of sanity in theological progress.

2. *The Limits of Natural Science*

In the last century the amazing advances of scientists in unveiling nature's secrets drew the attention of many, even among scientists themselves, away from the necessary limits of natural science—limits which our Modernist admirers of its methods and successes seem to overlook. These limits are now being more and more clearly acknowledged and even emphasized by scientists of the very first rank.[1]

(*a*) The first of these limits is the purely de-

[1] See Sir J. Arthur Thomson, in Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig. and Ethics, s.v.* "Science," §§ 8, 11; Karl Pearson, *The Grammar of Science, passim.*

scriptive and non-explanatory nature of scientific results. In a loose sense, of course, science is said to explain an event when making known its immediate physical antecedent. Thus we say that a rise of the thermometer is explained by increased heat. But strictly speaking no explanation is here given—only a description of the observed order or sequence of phenomena. *Why* a certain order prevails in natural phenomena is not explained. The fact that it does rule, so far as scientific observation extends, this and this only, is asserted. And the assertion is called a law of nature.

(*b*) In the second place, natural laws do not define what must happen, but only what is *regularly observed to happen under specified conditions.* It is reasonably assumed in what may be called the scientist's faith, although impossible to demonstrate, that these laws will always hold good so long as the conditions of their application continue, that is so long as the general system of nature endures. And the scientist reasonably trusts in the rationality of the universe. He therefore proceeds confidently in trust that nature will never put him to confusion, and that the generalized results of his investigations will never be fundamentally upset.

Christian theologians agree with him in this, for they believe that God is the ultimate Governor of the universe, and that capricious operations are incon-

sistent with His perfection. What is called the uniformity of nature is theologically interpreted as showing that God always operates in the best way, which means in a similar manner under similar conditions. The limitation for natural science is that in the plan and purpose of God, which is vaster than the order that is open to scientific scrutiny, new conditions and factors may arise, and new steps be taken, which, without at all stultifying the natural order, will cause events to happen that can neither be anticipated by science nor brought within the scope of its generalizations. These events we call miracles, and their possibility can neither be proved nor disproved by science. They come to be known when severally observed to happen, one by one. In brief, science is concerned only with events that can be generalized and, on that basis, can be predicted as part of the present continuing visible order. Beyond this field science can assert or deny nothing.

(c) Finally, natural science is exclusively concerned with natural events and their observable conditions. Articles of the Christian faith, which have reference to invisible realities, to Christ's preexistent Person, to the triune nature and purpose of God, and to the divinely predicted end of things, do not come within its field. Whether they are credible or incredible must be determined by reasons lying outside its range. Scientists may indeed

have rational grounds for accepting or rejecting such doctrines, but they are not rightly described as scientific. The scientific does not include all that can be accepted rationally, but only that which can be observed and generalized for the description of the present visible order.

3. *Naturalism is not Science*

Naturalism is not science, although many people, including apparently some of our Modernists, confuse its assertions with scientific results. It is a speculative philosophy only; and, while professedly undogmatic, is really excessively dogmatic in claiming to make scientific assertions concerning matters lying outside of the field of science. Its distinctive dogma is that all knowable reality is subject to the methods of generalized description employed by natural science; and consequently nothing is either knowable or credible that cannot thus be described. It ought to be seen that such an assertion is unscientific, for it is concerned with what confessedly lies beyond the range of scientific scrutiny and description.[2]

Science can make assertions only with reference to subject matters within its field of enquiry. The

[2] On Naturalism, see R. Otto, *Naturalism and Religion;* N. S. Talbot, *Returning Tide of Faith,* chh. xii–xiii.

credibility of assertions concerning events and realities outside this field natural science cannot determine. It has to be judged on other grounds. To say this is entirely consistent with acknowledgment that no assertion from any quarter is credible which reduces science to confusion by nullifying its fundamental trust in the rational continuity of nature.

We must not make the blunder of regarding the distinctive mental habits and limitations of scientific specialists as serving of themselves to prove or disprove anything. It is a natural result of constantly and intently thinking and reasoning in the manner required in successful scientific work that one gets into a mental groove, and is apt to approach all questions whatsoever in the same manner. The consequence is that expert natural scientists sometimes become unable to adjust their minds to the consideration of truths lying outside the scientific sphere and requiring other methods of approach and judgment. Charles Darwin lamented the fact that his absorption in scientific work had deprived him of his early power of discerning and enjoying beauty.

The same effect may, and does, appear in the inability of certain natural scientists to reckon discerningly with the truths and arguments of religion, and in their consequent loss of faith. It should be clear, however, that such a difficulty arises from

personal and subjective limitations. It affords no evidence whatever that science and the faith mutually disagree. The fact is that many scientists of the foremost rank have been and are devout believers in the doctrines of the Catholic creeds.

4. *The Attack on Miracles*

The traditional faith of Christians includes belief that certain events have actually happened which are generally acknowledged to be miraculous—impossible without supernatural causation. Those who occupy the standpoint of naturalism confidently deny the possibility of such events, and claim to make this denial on strictly scientific grounds. As I have just shown, this claim to speak in the name of science is mistaken, for miracles do not belong to the order of events with which natural science, as science, can concern itself. Unless, therefore, miracles can be shown to nullify the rational continuity of the present natural order, upon which the possibility of natural science depends, the preliminary question whether they can happen is not scientific.

Naturalistic objectors habitually support their denial of miracles by views concerning the universe which widely prevailed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but which are now out of date.

The purely mechanical conception of things and events, alleged to preclude any divine intervention, has ceased to be accepted by the scientific experts of to-day. In brief, the current arguments against miracles, alleged to be scientific, are antiquated. Unhappily Liberal and Modernist writers are not as a rule expert scientists, but reflect in their arguments the mechanical conception of nature which science has outgrown. The more radical among them frankly accept the naturalistic point of view, and are thereby precluded from facing the evidence for miracles. Our Episcopal Modernists do not as a rule consciously go so far; but by their method of argument they do show that the naturalistic idea of the universe controls their imaginations. They do not seem to have found out how unscientific it is.

This idea lurks in the inaccurate although somewhat common, definition of miracles as events which *violate* natural law. Such a definition gives plausibility to the mistaken inference that they "nullify the rational continuity of the present natural order, upon which the possibility of science depends." If they really did this they would of course be incredible on scientific grounds. But they do not.

The same out-of-date idea of the universe lurks in the argument that to believe in miracles leads us to look for God's revelation of Himself wholly in

the abnormal and capricious, as if nature were outside of God and purely mechanical. The fact is that theism, or the doctrine that nature is God's handiwork and everywhere reveals His uninterrupted activity and purposeful wisdom has always been earnestly maintained by intelligent believers in the miracles of the Gospels and Catholic creeds. Indeed it is because men discern the power and wisdom of God in nature that they recognize His hand in miracles; and what they learn of God's attributes in the natural order becomes a test by which to distinguish genuine miracles from spurious ones.

The difference in this connection between natural and supernatural events is not that the latter are more divine, or more significantly so, than the former, and that revelation comes exclusively from the supernatural. The difference lies in the *kind* of revelation that is afforded in each case, and in the respective immediate purposes of God which the natural and the miraculous severally fulfil. Natural events pertain to the development and maintenance of the order of things in which God has placed us at this stage of the larger divine drama. Miracles, on the other hand, are shiftings of scenery, supplementary operations, new factors, that pertain to transitional stages in God's larger plan and serve to keep this present stage of things in line with the future world for which it is preparatory.

Again, the natural reveals divine purpose in all things, but affords no *definition* of that purpose; whereas the miraculous indicates more articulately what God's purpose is, and accredits prophetic definition of it. Without the natural there could be no general religious outlook for man; but the supernatural gradually gave to God's Church the specifically Christian outlook, with its authentic knowledge of God's kingdom and of the appointed way into eternal life with Him which is man's final end. Unless this the Christian outlook is wholly at fault, genuine miracles are rational factors in God's fulfilment of the vaster plan to which the natural also ministers. They therefore have a credible place in the whole, and so far from in any way "violating" the natural order, they really promote in their own way the same purpose to the fulfilment of which "the whole creation moves." I shall illustrate this conclusion when I come to consider the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection.

5. *The Real Meaning and Place of Miracles*

The fact that the ancients regarded many events as miraculous which the progress of science has shown to be natural events not yet understood, has led many to define the supernatural as simply the unknown natural. But, although certain reputable

Christian writers have adopted such a definition, it is misleading, and has the result, often unintended, of obscuring and even of nullifying the doctrine of our Lord's Person and work. An objective distinction between what is natural and what is supernatural to man is essential to belief in the Christian faith.

Miracles may be defined as visible supernatural events; but to understand this we must understand what is meant by the term "supernatural." The supernatural is not the unnatural, as many seem to think; nor is it contrary to nature. Its meaning depends upon the particular application we are making of the terms "nature" and "natural" when we employ that word.

There are many natures in the total field of reality—all the way from inorganic things up to the triune God; and when considered together they make up a rising series, in which the higher may be described as *super,* above, the lower. Human nature, for example, is a super-nature as compared with brute nature. What distinguishes these natures, and justifies regarding one nature as higher or lower than another, is the special group of properties, powers and functions that, in God's distribution of His operations, are made to be *native* to each kind of being—or the *resident* properties, forces and functions in each kind.

Corresponding to these several natures is a rising series of applications of the word "natural"; and in each application we mean whatever in a given kind or grade of being can be explained by its own native or resident properties, powers or forces and functions. It is natural to a man, for example, to be and do whatever the properties, forces and functions resident in human beings, *as such,* enable him to be and do.

Having in mind these objective differences between the natures of various grades of being, and between what is natural to one and to another, we can see that what is natural to one kind of being to do may be *above* what is natural to another kind. And that is what we mean when we say that, although it is natural to a man to think abstractly and form religious opinions, it is supernatural to an apple-tree to do so. In Christian use the term "supernatural" applies to that which, although perfectly natural to a super-human agent, in particular to God, is above what is natural to man and to all beings of lower natures than his. It has to be explained by a higher nature than his, and by higher forces than are resident in the group of natures of which human nature is the crown. A miracle is such an event if it is a visible one and innovates upon natural phenomena. The operations of God

in our souls, called "grace," are also supernatural, but because invisible are not called miracles.

It can readily be seen that while the supernatural and miraculous in theological use of language stand by themselves and have unique meaning, they are not properly speaking *un*natural, for they are natural to God, whether He performs them immediately or enables His human agents to do so. Moreover, on a lower level, we find abundant analogies in our own exercise of power to supplement, manipulate and even counteract the properties, forces and functions of the natural realm beneath the human. The whole progress of human invention is filled with illustrations. We counteract the law of gravity by our invention and use of aeroplanes, and in a thousand ways bring about events which if described from the point of view of the natures utilized are miraculous to them.

The complex and mutually counteracting interplay of the particular natures that make up "nature" in the ordinary use of that word involve no incredible unreason—not even when we include the factor of human wills. Why, therefore, should the coming in of a higher and wiser will than that of man, and of other events higher than those which science can generalize, be thought to involve caprice, unreason and the "violation" of nature?

6. *Tests of Credibility*

I have referred to the fact that events have been regarded as miraculous which subsequent progress in knowledge has shown to be natural in the usual sense of that term. It must also be acknowledged that many alleged events, even biblical ones, which would be truly miraculous if they really happened, did not happen at all. And this fact is given by some moderns as throwing doubt on the Gospel miracles. What it really shows is that an alleged miracle must be able to meet certain tests of genuineness and quality before it can be rationally accepted as real and divine.

(*a*) There must be evidence, and it must be competent, trustworthy and sufficient. The mere fact that a biblical writer describes a miracle is not always sufficient.

(*b*) A real miracle is necessarily related to the general course of the history of God's world; and its credibility depends upon this relatedness being perceptible to the competent. A purely capricious wonder, especially if the innovation involved is either grotesque or violent, is not credible.

(*c*) On the principle that God does nothing superfluous, no alleged miracle can be reasonably thought to be from God for which a sufficient reason or occasion is lacking. This principle explains why

miracles are usually connected with some decisive step in God's plan, of which the Incarnation and associated events afford the most important example.

(*d*) Inasmuch as a divine miracle signifies in a special way an act and revelation of God Himself, it will necessarily be found to have a spiritual quality and meaning agreeable to its source.

These tests require for their just application real openmindedness towards the possibility of the miracles under investigation, and spiritual capacity to estimate their congruity with God's plan and method of working. The negative bias that genuine Modernists exhibit in this matter does not encourage dependence upon their competence rightly to determine the credibility of the Virgin Birth and bodily Resurrection of our Lord.

To conclude the argument of this chapter, I wish to emphasize a very central thought. The standpoint of sane belief in miracles is the Christian view of the world as God's world, and the belief that God is no mere *anima mundi,* but is a personal being, who is not only actively working throughout the natural order, but transcends it, and governs it in relation to a vaster purpose of His own.[3]

[3] On the subversive effect in Modernist thought of failure to realize the transcendence and personality of God, see Chas. Gore, *The Holy Spirit and the Church,* pp. 321–324, 331–334.

CHAPTER VIII

BIBLICAL CRITICISM

1. *The Nature and Origin of the Bible*

THE Bible is built up out of many documents of different kinds, produced at various stages in the education by God of His Church, Jewish and Christian, and having a considerable variety of immediate occasions and purposes. It is really a library; and because of the various degrees of personal inspiration that attended the production of its documents, as well as the divine guidance and sanction that have given to the whole its use and authority for that use in the Church, it has been called "the Divine Library." In the Greek it was called the *Biblia* (plural), the "Books"; but in being transliterated through the Latin into English the name has assumed the singular number, the "Bible." Both forms agree with fact. The plural indicates its varied productions, while the singular "Bible" indicates its spiritual unity as a whole.

One divine mind and purpose overruled not only the human production of its books, but also their

gradual selection and combining in one Scripture for making its readers "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." [1] The inspiration is therefore twofold: (*a*) that of its several writers, editors and redactors, which varies widely in degree; (*b*) that of the resulting Scripture, under guidance of the Holy Spirit authenticated, united in one Canon, and ordered to be read for upbuilding in faith. It is in the latter application that the word "inspired" is used in the New Testament—"Every Scripture inspired of God." [2] The inspiration of the sacred writers is also there asserted, but in other terms.

The ancient Church never defined officially the nature and method of inspiration, although there is abundant evidence of three elements in its doctrine: (*a*) that the Old Testament prophets and the apostolic writers were personally and sufficiently inspired of God; (*b*) that the resulting Bible has divine inspiration and authority for its religious purpose. It constitutes appointed reading for believers; (*c*) that the Bible in various ways contains all doctrines and principles necessary to be believed and applied by Christians for salvation and spiritual health. The ancient Church did not treat Scripture as "source" of the faith, for that was recognized to

[1] II Tim. iii, 15.
[2] II Tim. iii, 16.

come directly from Christ and His Holy Spirit to the Church. But it did hold that appeal to the Scriptures is the divinely appointed rule for testing the Church's faithful adherence to its God-given message. Accordingly, nothing was held as necessary to be believed which could not be confirmed by Scripture. It was generally maintained that the Church is the interpreter of Scripture to this extent that its universally accepted faith will always be found to afford the doctrinal clue to the meaning of Scripture at large.

2. *The Growth of Bibliolatry*

The Jews came to regard the Scriptures in a very mechanical way, and anticipated some later Christian developments. But, while apostolic and post-apostolic Christian writers exhibited great reverence for them as "the Word of God," they were strikingly free in their quotations and use of biblical passages for the support of Christian teaching and practice. In joyous assurance that the divine purpose behind all the Scriptures is centred in Christ, they discerned with a non-critical abandon many Christian lessons and predictions in the Old Testament which to the more detached modern scholars do not appear to be confirmed by critical exegesis. The ancients did not *aim* to be critical, and often their free interpreta-

tion of Scripture seems more in accord with its underlying divine purport and appointed use than the subservience of moderns to detached words and phrases, with their assumption that the immediate and exact thought of the original writer makes up the whole meaning of his language in its biblical context.[3] We much need a wholesome combination of modern exactitude with the ancient standpoint. Such a combination would complete and rightly apply the valuable results of modern biblical criticism.

The primitive doctrine of Scripture was crystallized in the habit of calling the Bible "the Word of God," a phrase which might have a meaning analogous to that of "the house of God," that is, referring to its being built for, and consecrated to, a use of divine appointment. One might take it in such meaning without contradicting any official definition of the ancient Catholic Church. But the tendency to use the phrase in a more literalistic and mechanical sense was a natural outcome of the increasing tendency to magnify sacred things with heedless disregard for limiting considerations. So to call the Bible the Word of God came popularly to mean a Scripture dictated throughout by God.

Out of this theory grew further notions: (*a*) that all the sacred writers were equally inspired, and to

[3] Cf. I St. Pet., i, 10–12.

the degree of being invariably inerrant in their statements on every subject; (*b*) that all parts of Scripture have demonstrative value for their respective subject-matters, and that detached proof-texts are conclusive, severally considered; (*c*) that no alleged results of extra-scriptural, historical and scientific investigation may be accepted as true, if they go counter to any statements of the sacred writers. There also grew up the superstitious practice among the ignorant of appealing to passages of Scripture, selected hap-hazard, for solution of all sorts of practical problems. And several deplorable religious ideas and practices, based upon giving equal and abiding force to every part of Scripture, have been exploited with considerable following, even in modern days. Mormon polygamy affords an example of this.

These developments had in the main gained wide popular acceptance previously to the Protestant revolution. But in giving confessional standing to the doctrine that the Bible is "the sole source and rule of the faith," Protestants in effect stigmatized as unorthodox any denial of the equal inspiration of the sacred writers or of the inerrancy of their statements on all subjects. At the same time their strong emphasis on "private judgment" in the interpretation of Scripture led logically, and in due course, to the application of such judgment to the task of

biblical criticism. We can see, therefore, that in diverse ways Protestant Fundamentalism and biblical criticism, with its mixture of valuable results and destructive theories, have both grown logically out of the Protestant revolution.

I desire, before going on, to emphasize the fact that the post-apostolic developments above described, whether among Catholics or Protestants, are not parts of the original Christian faith. And their being discredited in our day, so far from undermining the apostolic and Catholic doctrine concerning Scripture, relieves that doctrine of embarrassing burdens. The divine authority of the Bible *for its appointed use* is as secure as ever.

3. *Biblical Criticism and its Results*

We should not think that we can safely describe in advance the qualities that will be found in the Word of God. The Bible has been given to us for devout study; and only by such study, by rightly ordered criticism, can we learn what kind of a Bible it is, in particular, to what degree, and with what resulting incidental accuracy, its several writers were personally inspired.

Again, we should not think that biblical criticism means *adverse* criticism. It means searching examination of Scripture for the sake of accurate

biblical knowledge. Such criticism may, of course, be untrustworthy in its conclusions, because of either the critic's lack of scholarly skill, insufficient data, unspiritual and hostile animus, or misleading initial assumptions. No critic is infallible. But it is no longer possible intelligently to deny that certain results of modern biblical criticism are dependable, and clarify rather than undermine the belief that the Scriptures are the Word of God.[4]

(*a*) Textual criticism has forced us to realize more fully than previously the uncertainty of the accepted readings of very many passages in Scripture, and the impossibility of producing an edition of the Bible which does not differ from the original in numerous details. These variations happily do not affect or obscure the real substance of biblical teaching at large on any article of the Christian faith; but they very plainly upset the verbal dictation theory of inspiration as applied to our existing Bible.

(*b*) Literary criticism has upset previous ideas as to authorships and dates of biblical documents. Several Old Testament books have been shown to be of composite authorship. The Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is no longer accepted by the gen-

[4] I have more fully discussed this whole subject in *Authority, Eccles, and Biblical,* ch. vi–vii (with refs.); and in *The Bible and Modern Criticism* (Morehouse).

erality of competent biblical scholars. In general, if the place of individual documents in the Word of God depends upon their human authorships, upon the accuracy of their descriptive titles, and upon their freedom from subsequent editing, redacting, and combination with other documents, then that place in a number of instances is discredited and the Sacred Canon requires radical reconstruction. No such reconstruction is needed, for what the Bible should contain has been once for all determined by our Lord's sanction of the then completed Old Testament and by the Holy Spirit's guidance of the Church in gradually forming the New Testament Canon. What literary criticism really helps us to see is that the content and divine authority of the Bible for its appointed Christian use is distinct, and to a degree independent of, the sources and original forms of its several documents. It is the Bible that Christians have received, rather than so many ancient documents severally preserved; and they have received it as given for a specific Christian use.

(*c*) Historical and scientific criticism has shown conclusively that biblical writers were not everywhere inerrant in their narratives, but that they reflect the limitations of knowledge of their times. This is too widely acknowledged to require argument here. Moreover, doctrinal and moral criticism has brought to light the presence in Old Testament books

of both doctrinal and moral ideas and ideals which are inconsistent with New Testament teaching. The Old Testament language concerning Sheol, the place of the departed, and its approval of vindictive forms of justice and retaliation afford examples.

These results have not dethroned the Bible from its authoritative position in Christian use; but they have removed unwarranted and indefensible enlargements of the doctrine of biblical inspiration. They relieve us from the need of thinking that the Bible contains a series of oracles of equal value and infallibility. The progressiveness of God's education of His people sufficiently explains the unequal values *for us* of the memorials of that education therein preserved. And recollection in our use of the Bible of the specific and limited purpose for which it has been divinely given to us causes the whole of it to serve in making men "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." It also frees us from useless fears as to possible results of historical and scientific investigation.

4. *Critical Blunders*

Biblical criticism, as I have indicated above, is not always competent; and is sometimes vitiated by unspiritual and hostile animus and by blinding initial assumptions. We should not maintain, however,

that we can consistently accept the undeniable results of Old Testament criticism and at the same time condemn the application of criticism to the New Testament. It is not New Testament criticism as such which is to be rejected, but the assumptions that have controlled such criticism in its destructive forms, and which explain its negative conclusions.

The general honesty, sobriety and credibility of New Testament narratives have been amply vindicated in our day by competent critics. It has been urged *a priori,* however, that acknowledged errors of magnitude in one part of the Bible suggest the likelihood of their being found in the other part. But an important difference between the Two Testaments has to be reckoned with. The Old Testament narratives in question were written centuries after many of the events alleged in them, whereas those of the New Testament embody, either directly or indirectly, the memories of living and firsthand witnesses. Moreover, what knowledge we have from other sources tends to show that these narratives correctly reflect the historical conditions of the age to which they refer.

The critics who have reached negative conclusions touching important elements of the Gospel narratives are obviously controlled by two assumptions: (*a*) that miracles such as the Virgin Birth, the bodily Resurrection, and others given in the Gospels, violate

natural law and cannot happen; (*b*) that Christ was not a preëxistent divine Person, but merely a human person, although highly endowed and of exalted moral character.

I have yet to discuss the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. I content myself at present, therefore, with pointing out the impossibility that those who make such assumptions should do justice to the evidence for these events. They simply beg the question at the outset. I have sufficiently indicated in my previous chapter the lack of warrant for the assumption that the Gospel miracles referred to could not happen.

CHAPTER IX

FAITH AND SCHOLARSHIP

1. *Faith and the Faith*

I TRUST that, in discussing the two chief lines of scholarship that are said by Liberals and Modernists to require abandonment, or at least re-interpretation, of certain creed doctrines, I have not seemed to disparage either the value of scholarship in relation to Christian doctrine or the importance for intelligent faith of its recent results. It would be contrary to my long-established convictions to do so; contrary also, I am certain, to the convictions of many thousands of those in the Episcopal Church who, like myself, firmly believe all the articles of the Christian faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed, interpreted in its original sense. But if we are clearly to understand wherein the proper function and value of such scholarship consist, we ought first to reckon with the two subjects of *faith* and *the faith*.

For our purpose it is sufficient to define *faith* as the personal appropriation, in belief and practical application, of truths spiritually discerned, and

which are supernaturally revealed rather than discovered by unassisted human enquiry. By *the faith* is meant the body of truths thus revealed, and taught to be necessary for our guidance in pursuing the way of eternal life. The spiritual discernment by which we apprehend these truths is made possible by the gracious enlightenment of God's Holy Spirit, and is not dependent either in exercise or in assurance upon scholarship. The receptive spirit of a child is primary and indispensable. The nature of faith is such that the mysteries of God are usually hid from the worldly wise and prudent and revealed to babes.[1]

This law of faith makes the appropriation of divine truth—*such* appropriation as opens the way to God and eternal life—possible for all, for the ignorant as well as the learned, for the foolish as well as the wise, for the unscholarly as well as the scholarly. It is what we have received with spiritual docility, rather than what we have toilsomely investigated and thought through, which according to New Testament teaching enlightens us *savingly*. The faith is available in every age for all, and under the same conditions of humble receptivity for all. It is catholic—that is, within Everyman's reach. And faith is found to serve its purpose, even in the unintelligent and unscholarly; although, if exercised

[1] St. Luke x, 21. Cf. I Cor. ii.

with due sense of responsibility, it will become intelligent in proportion to the believer's general mental equipment and education.

But the limited range of the faith which can thus be appropriated by Everyman should be realized. It consists exclusively of *saving* truths, the truths we must receive in order rightly to travel Godward. It does not include the wider range of progressive and changing knowledge and opinion to which, as context, believers in each age inevitably endeavour to relate the faith. Nor does it include the inferences which believers make from articles of the faith when thus linked up with their general knowledge and opinions. It consists of truths once for all revealed, abidingly true, and in essential substance unalterable.

2. *The Part of Christian Scholarship*

Christian scholarship has to do in general with making Christian faith more intelligent, and thus more persuasive and defensible in the intellectual world.[2] It did not discover the faith, and it can neither enlarge nor alter the substance of what is necessary to be believed by faithful Christians. It cannot of itself produce faith. But among the intelligent it is useful for removing difficulties, and

[2] I St. Pet. iii. 15.

often becomes an incidental instrument of the Spirit in His work of spiritually enlightening our minds. In order thus to serve, however, scholarship has need to be controlled by the humble spirit of faith rather than by the challenging spirit of mere intellectualism.

The leading functions of Christian scholarship may be classified as follows: (*a*) to confirm the faith by accurately conducted biblical study, study governed by the historical method, but also by truly Christian presuppositions and outlook; (*b*) to eliminate from current definitions of articles of the faith whatever has been humanly added to them, the test of Scripture being employed to that end; (*c*) to link up the faith in a reasonable way with wider human knowledge and opinion, and to correct this linking up whenever the attainment of more mature knowledge requires it; (*d*) to translate the ancient language of faith, whether biblical or ecclesiastical, into the terms and forms of thought of subsequent generations, care being taken that the translation is not only intelligible but faithful to the original; (*e*) to reconstruct theological science and apologetic, without alteration of the original faith, whenever this will make the content of the faith more reasonably understood by intelligent men, both in itself and in its manifold bearings and applications. Catholic theology is not the faith, but is a human science built around it. Being human, this theology also

makes progress by the aid of progressive scholarship, often correcting its human elements, but always presupposing the unchanging truth of the faith.

3. *The Present State of Scholarship*

Modernists are accusing conservative maintainers of ecclesiastical doctrine of lack of scholarship, and no doubt much defense of such doctrine is unscholarly. Every standpoint of considerable acceptance has crude defenders. None the less, there is an immense amount of real and competent scholarship arrayed in support of the traditional faith.

Several causes have combined to hide this fact from Modernists. In the first place, they do not usually study conservative theology seriously, as is shown by the grotesque misconstructions which they often put upon it. They rightly plead for open-mindedness, but do not exhibit it in the conservative direction. Secondly, they take for granted that to believe in the literal fact of the miracles which they reject is necessarily unscholarly, quite overlooking the fact that their own prejudice against such miracles is based, not upon scholarship but upon naturalistic assumptions and question-begging dogmatism. Finally, publicity attends innovating rather than conservative scholarship. Much scholarly work on the conservative side is known only to

conservatives, whereas we all learn of the work of Liberal and Modernist scholars, and it is difficult for an intelligent conservative to close his mind to their arguments.

And it is this last-mentioned cause that conceals the general state of scholarship from ordinary men, the men whose chief reading is in the newspapers, popular periodicals and current fiction. Even many of the clergy are misled. While I was in England last year an intelligent priest said to me, "I would have greater respect for the Anglo-Catholic movement if it were more scholarly." I sat down at once and compiled a list of such Anglo-Catholic scholars as I could immediately remember. Giving it to him, I asked, "Can there be furnished an equally large and weighty list of scholars in any other section of English Churchmen?" After some pondering he said, "No." The Anglo-Catholic movement, whatever else it may be, is essentially conservative for all articles of the Catholic creeds; and its scholarship, either unknown or disparaged by Modernists, is a significant factor in the present situation.

It is axiomatic, of course, that freedom of enquiry and conviction is essential to successful scholarship. Concerning this freedom, and the consistency therewith of the position taken in this volume, I shall have something to say in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER X

FAITH AND FREEDOM

1. *Mutually Interacting Principles*

THIS chapter may seem abstract to some of my readers. If so, they can skip it without losing the main thread of my argument.

In relation to doctrine there are two Christian principles of fundamental importance, neither one of which can be sacrificed without damage to the other and spiritual disaster to souls. When separately defined and contrasted they may seem to be mutually opposed; but they are really mutually dependent and mutually protective. I refer to responsibility for rightly seeking, accepting, and obeying revealed truth, on the one hand, and personal freedom in truth seeking, conviction, and expression thereof in word and act on the other hand.

As I have said, neither of these can safely be sacrificed. It follows that neither of them can safely be emphasized disproportionately or exclusively. The reason is that disproportionate atten-

tion to one of them leaves no place in the mind for sufficient attention to the other. It is necessary, therefore, that we attend to each by turns, and thus do justice to both. Moreover, as we shall see, neither of these principles assumes its true form, or can be brought to perfect practical observance, when considered and applied without reference to the other. Within the Church the ever-recurring problem is to protect both in mutual relation, and thus most effectively to protect each fruitfully.

2. *Responsibility*

It is generally acknowledged that in order to be responsible we must have real freedom in the sphere of our responsibility. But this freedom is responsible freedom. Freedom without this limit is unprincipled license; and universal experience shows that this finally results in personal defeat and slavery. It is not real freedom. The principle of responsibility, then, cannot be neglected if freedom is to be preserved.

The specific kind of responsibility which we here have to face is that for obedience to revealed truth. And this involves due observance of those methods and conditions of finding, accepting, and expressing such truth as general experience shows to be required for its spiritual discernment, its protection

from subversion and its unadulterated and unreduced propagation among the mentally untrained masses of believers. We are by nature social beings; and in no department of human action is pure individualism, regardless of the interests of others, consistent with either adequately responsible action or genuine freedom. We have to remember three things: (*a*) It is the truth that makes us free; (*b*) The freedom which truth promotes is social, dependent for full enjoyment upon a successful propaganda of truth among the ignorant as well as the scholarly; (*c*) The truth referred to is religious truth, that which God has revealed and which had to be thus revealed if men were to obtain it.

A principle function and duty of the Church is to safeguard this principle of responsibility in relation to revealed and saving truth. Human causes and limitations have made its execution of this function imperfect; and, in particular, have led to methods of discipline which have endangered the principle of freedom, also incumbent upon the Church to safeguard. The modern revolt against ecclesiastical restraints is therefore natural. But it is also one-sided, and in the long run will encourage chaotic license rather than true free thought. If the Church's propaganda and discipline are really imperilled in the effort to restore the balance between responsibility and freedom, there is nothing to take

their place, and unregulated license will result. This will be as fatal to true mental freedom as to responsibility, and the possibility among the masses of obtaining helpful guidance to saving truth will be very seriously reduced.

My argument here is not based upon any particular theory of ecclesiastical authority, certainly not upon the theory of ecclesiastical infallibility. It rests in the social aspects and practical requirements of sound knowledge of saving truth by Christians in general. It is not *individualistic* intellectual gymnastic in truth-*seeking* that will make men free, but the *acceptance* of truth by Christians *in common;* and this is not possible without a corporate propaganda and discipline of some kind, such as the Church alone can provide. This may need reformation, but its flouting spells disaster for the mass of the faithful.

3. *Freedom*

Freedom, as has been acknowledged, is a necessary condition of responsibility. Only free agents are responsible, and their responsibility is confined to the sphere of their freedom. This principle is very precious, and is rightly insisted upon by Modernists. The *onesided manner* of this insistence is what is open to adverse criticism, and it is so in

spite of their sincerity and of the reality of the obscurantism which they reject—with exaggerated ideas as to its extent among conservatives, I must add.

I must not exaggerate. I do not accuse Modernists of actually *denying* the principle of responsibility. Their mistake lies in losing sight of certain integral elements of responsible action through disproportionate emphasis upon the principle of mental freedom. That is, they onesidedly sacrifice to freedom genuine requirements of responsibility. And the outcome of their full success is bound to be destructive to freedom as well as to responsibility. Mental freedom in the sphere of our discussion is not unregulated and individualistic intellectualism, but humble-minded pursuit and acceptance of revealed truth, with subsequent guidance of thought by its requirements.

In this connection, it is quite misleading to think that the acceptance of a dogmatic faith is necessarily a hindrance to free thought. If that faith agrees with truth, it affords sound premises and a secure basis for free mental activity. Only if it is either false, unintelligible or misleading, does dogma hamper mental freedom. In no other field than that of religion do sane men think that an increase of assured premises reduces the freedom and value of scholarship and thought. The only defensible aim

of scholarship is to minister to truth, to its attainment and intelligent coördination and application. It therefore welcomes previously established truth —in sound theology that includes truth known to have been divinely revealed—as affording secure basis of further progress. And clear definitions of such premises will be gladly utilized by genuine scholars unless found to be defective. The thought which real thinkers wish to be free is intelligent thought—not aimless mental agitation. The objection to ecclesiastical dogma as being inconsistent with mental freedom has no validity unless such dogma is defective; and it is a very significant fact that historically this objection to the creeds has its origin in loss of belief in their truth. Those who are satisfied as to their truth feel no restriction of mental freedom in accepting them.

CHAPTER XI

ECCLESIASTICAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. *Bases of Argument*

In approaching the questions connected with ecclesiastical control of doctrine, the imposition and interpretation of creeds, and the resulting obligations of Church members and ministers, I wish to make clear the limits within which my argument on these questions is conducted. First, however, candour requires me to acknowledge that *personally* I unreservedly accept the claim of the Catholic Church to be the divinely appointed and supernaturally guided teacher of saving truth. I belong to the Episcopal Church because I believe it to be a real part of the Catholic Church. While I think the term "infallibility" is as misleading when applied to the Church as I have shown it to be when applied to the Bible, because it seems to imply more than can either be proved by Scripture or squared with history, I do accept the earthly finality of ecclesiastical authority for the definition of revealed doctrine; and I believe that real loyalty to the teaching and in-

ternal discipline of the Catholic Church is certain, is *alone certain,* to secure *sufficient* knowledge of saving truth for the believer's attainment of eternal life with God.

(*a*) But my present argument, for obvious reasons, is not at all based upon appeal to any supernatural authority of the Church, or to any alleged earthly finality within its sphere of Catholic teaching. I wish to meet the Modernist contentions wholly on natural grounds, and to use arguments that can be seen to be relevant even by men who look askance at the Catholic claim. *The only ecclesiastical authority to which I shall appeal is the natural authority which belongs to any legitimate organized society to define its nature and functions, and to determine and enforce its rules of membership and official tenure in such wise as to protect them from unauthorized change.* Necessarily this authority can be exercised by such society *only in its organized capacity.* Its rules and requirements rest for authority on constitutional methods of corporate prescription; and movements of opinion within the society have no legitimate effect in changing its requirements unless, and until, they are registered in constitutional corporate action. Upon these conditions the continuance of the society for its constitutional purposes absolutely depends.

(*b*) A second fundamental premise is, that *no*

individual possesses the right either to membership or to office in an organization, except upon the basis of its constitutionally prescribed conditions and regulations. To reject this premise is equivalent to rejecting the right of the society to continue being what it is.[1] Some Modernists do indeed take the high ground that, since the Church of God is by divine appointment the home of all who acknowledge Jesus Christ, no additional conditions of membership may be imposed by that Church. Specious as such argument is, it is doubly at fault. In the first place, the exclusion of those who refuse to hear the Church is as plainly justified by Christ's authority as is its being the appointed home of Christians. Secondly, such an argument presupposes acceptance of the Church's supernatural status, and this is hopelessly inconsistent with the Modernist standpoint. To argue on distinctively Catholic premises is not logically permissible unless the Catholic standpoint is accepted, and such acceptance is fatal to Modernism.

[1] The late Bishop Creighton said, *Persecution and Tolerance,* pp. 126, 127, "The Church is a witness to the truth, and her primary duty is to see that her witness is true. The means by which she is to accomplish that duty is to see that no teaching is given under her authority which contradicts or impairs the essential elements of that truth committed to her charge." Of those claiming irresponsible liberty he adds, quoting from Amiel, "They confuse the right of the individual to be free with the duty of the institution to be something."

2. *Propagandist Function of the Church*

The particular branch of the constitutionally established functions of the Episcopal Church which is involved in the present controversy is the doctrinal; and in defining it I am concerned only with what the constitutional language and prescriptions of the society named "the Protestant Episcopal Church" plainly declare and imply. The official language of this Church, contained in canonical legislation and the Prayer Book, determines what is its fundamental aim with regard to doctrine, and does so *in fact,* whether the aim thus avowed agrees with Scripture and Catholic conceptions or not. Personally, of course, I think it does so agree. If I did not think so, I would not be an "Episcopalian."

The established aim of this Church cannot be determined on grounds of value. This Church is, and is entitled to be, what it actually has made itself to be up to the present hour, regardless of the merits or demerits of its constitution and functions. It may be in need of reform, of changes in its constitutional aims and prescriptions. But what its existing constitution makes it to be, this it remains, regardless of reformatory views and movements, until corporate action changes it. Modernists, *as such,* have no legislative authority.

Moreover, laxity of discipline within the Church,

or the prevalence of a certain amount of toleration of unlawful teaching, is not relevant to the question before us, so long as this toleration is simply the exercise of wise discretion in taking official cognizance of canonical offences, and does not obtain the form of their specific sanction by corporate legislation. To argue otherwise is to assume that law remains law only when enforced with martinet exactitude and with entire exclusion of administrative discretion. That particular laws can fall into abeyance through general and long-continued neglect is true, but the requirements assailed by Modernists obviously have incurred no such neglect. Toleration has no meaning, except as applied to things considered with good reason to be unlawful. My point is that even considerable toleration cannot *of itself* alter the law or modify the answer to the question as to what the Church officially prescribes. The suggestion made in one quarter, that by evading the meaning of ecclesiastical language with impunity Modernists can secure precedents that will modify the Church's requirements,[2] is of course contrary to legal principles, and points to ecclesiastical chaos rather than to reform. Official noncognizance of law-breaking does not repeal the law in question.

Coming to particulars:—

[2] Dr. D. S. Miller, in *The New Republic,* Mch. 5, 1924, p. 36.

(*a*) In organizing independently of the mother Church, the Episcopal Church embodied in its Prayer Book the statement that "this Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or worship." This has reference, of course, to the then existing doctrine of the Church of England; and no subsequent changes of doctrine in that Church can of themselves change our doctrine. Until the language quoted, however, is revised or eliminated, it commits us to the essentials of the Anglican position as finally expressed in the Prayer Book of 1662 —not the personal views of Anglican Reformers, but only to that which gained undeniable affirmation in official formularies of the English Church.

(*b*) Involved in this acceptance of the essentials of Anglican doctrine, but also explicitly referred to in its prescribed prayers, is acceptance of the doctrine of Christ and of the Apostles and Prophets whereon God's Church is said to have been founded, elsewhere described as "the faith once delivered to the saints," and linked with "communion of the Catholic Church."

(*c*) In harmony with this "communion," the Catholic creeds, called Apostles' and Nicene, are prescribed for affirmation by ministers and laity alike in public services; and the Apostles' Creed is re-

quired to be accepted by candidates for Baptism, or in their name by their sponsors.

(*d*) The doctrine which every candidate for the priesthood is pledged by his ecclesiastically prescribed ordination vows to teach in his subsequent ministry is such as will meet at least three tests: 1. His personal persuasion that it is contained in Scripture; 2. So ministered "as this Church hath received the same"; 3. "To banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word." Unless his convictions permit an acknowledgment that this Church has correctly received the doctrine of Scripture, the candidate cannot fulfil these tests.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from all this is that this Church's constitutional prescriptions are based upon the assumption that it is charged with *a propaganda of doctrine once for all received,* the leading elements of which are embodied in its Prayer Book, especially in the so-called Apostles' and Nicene creeds. No room is left for the supposition that what is thus prescribed can be changed in its own content and meaning without legislation, simply as the result of scholarship; although abundant room remains for progressive theological science, charged with the task of coördinating the faith with the mental context of men's increasing knowledge of other things.

3. *Conditions of Membership*

Membership in the Episcopal Church is, of course, voluntary. Even those who have been admitted before the age of discretion are free to forsake it when they will. But the conditions of membership are necessarily prescribed corporately by the Church, and acceptance of membership plainly involves acceptance of these conditions so long as membership is retained. This surely is not open to reasonable dispute.

In relation to the subject under discussion, the most significant condition is acceptance of the Catholic creeds. Even if the proposal to eliminate acceptance of the Apostles' Creed from the Baptismal Office should be adopted, the requirement of its solemn recitation before God in public worship would remain. And, even if this recitation were made optional, no member could fulfil the generally imposed requirements of public worship without being committed at numerous points to the use or acceptance of language in which the several doctrines of the creeds are clearly set forth. We cannot reasonably think that changes in the requirements of creed recitation can change the scope of doctrine to which membership in this Church publicly commits those who accept it.

Thus, if members should be admitted on the mere

general profession of loyalty to Christ, the detailed series of Church doctrines which are set forth either directly or indirectly in the forms of worship *prescribed for all members alike* would still bear witness that the doctrinal conditions of loyal membership are what they have been. The Church's witness to the doctrines presupposed in *her discipline* is too manifold to be eliminated by anything short of revolutionary reconstruction of its Constitution and Prayer Book. And this fact shows how deeply ingrained in the Church's official mind is its sense of duty effectively to propagate the faith which it has received, without substantial change. It colours the whole devotional life of the Church.

But in thus enveloping its members in the atmosphere of received doctrine, and in imposing for common use "sound words" of definite meaning, the Church has always allowed in its discipline of the laity for the incapacity of untrained minds fully to enter into the meaning and bearing of the language which is prescribed for their use. A common faith is imposed *upon all,* whether clerical or lay; but the manner in which in practice it is to be received has only this in common, that the language of the Church and of the creeds is accepted dutifully with confidence in its correctness, whether the believer is able fully to understand it or not. This is what is conventionally called implicit faith, analogous to

the perfectly reasonable faith which teachable children show to their teachers. It carries with it, of course, the duty of trying to understand, and then of accepting *explicitly* so far as understanding enables one to do so. If such growth in understanding results in *reversal* of faith, there is an obvious refuge—to leave the Church which requires belief that the individual in question can no longer retain. In practice, no mere layman is ever treated as amenable to doctrinal discipline, unless he engages in public opposition to the Church's faith, thereby compelling the Church to take measures for protecting its propaganda.

4. *Ministerial Requirements*

The Church's ministers are official agents of its propaganda, and therefore their personal acceptance of its doctrine has peculiar importance and receives distinct emphasis in the Church's constitutional requirements. No one is compelled either to enter the ministry or to retain it, so that the conditions which the Church for self-protection imposes upon its exercise are not correctly described as interferences with personal freedom. They limit *official* liberty only—excluding liberty to use an official ministry in a manner opposed to its constitutionally prescribed purpose of propagating the Church's doc-

trine. In brief, the limitations imposed upon the Church's ministers are analogous to those imposed upon officials in every organized society, in particular in every society having propagandist aims.

No one is compelled to accept the distinctive principles of any particular political party; but if one accepts the position in a party of its recognized campaign speaker, he cannot *while retaining such position* justly excuse himself for attacking its principles on the plea of freedom to think for himself. He is indeed free to think for himself, but he is not free to retain office in a propaganda when such thinking has led him to views in vital conflict therewith. I am expressing what is usually taken for granted among reasonable men. *No one is entitled to use the plea of free thinking as excuse for retaining and using office contrary to its publicly stipulated purpose.* Accordingly, the Modernist appeal to the principle of mental freedom in investigation, opinion and expression, precious though that principle be, is entirely non-relevant. *The issue is one of official responsibility*—responsibility voluntarily accepted and retained, but not justly violated during its retention.

The doctrines which the Church plainly intends shall be propagated by its ministers are those which it prescribes to be confessed, whether in creed or devotional phrase, in its *Book of Common Prayer;*

and no evidence other than these prescriptions is needed to prove that the Church's ministers, simply by virtue of their office, are under obligation to teach these doctrines. But the Church has taken measures to emphasize this obligation by exacting pledges, both oral and written, of its faithful acceptance and observance; and has developed judicial machinery for the trial of ministers who publicly teach contrary to these doctrines. This emphasis, it should be observed, is not for the suppression of mental freedom but *for the safeguarding of an official propaganda.*

The argument that personal persuasion as to what is contained in Scripture *completely defines* the doctrine which a minister is pledged to teach is simply mistaken. In the first place, as I have indicated, whatever the Church in its Prayer Book prescribes to be confessed in creed and devotion is plainly part of the propaganda committed to the Church's ministers for official carrying on. Secondly, the vow to teach in agreement with personal persuasion as to the doctrine contained in Scripture is supplemented by the vow to teach doctrine "as this Church hath received the same," and every candidate before ordination is required to subscribe in writing to a declaration in which he promises to conform to the doctrine, discipline and worship of this Church. In brief, the personal conviction which the Church

stipulates as condition of office-bearing in its propaganda is that the teaching of Scripture and the doctrine of this Church *are in mutual accord.* The evidence that this is so is really conclusive.

We have come to the thorny question of the honesty of ministerial attacks on the Church's prescribed teaching. I dislike this subject greatly, but in view of its prominence in the Modernist attack on the bishops' pastoral my book will be incomplete unless I say something with reference to it. First of all, then, I insist here, as I have done in a previous chapter, that the bishops made no charge of personal dishonesty, of dishonest intent, against the Modernists. The limit of their warning was that "to deny or treat as immaterial" belief publicly professed by clergy and laity alike "cannot but expose us to the suspicion and the danger of dishonesty and unreality."

Dishonesty in relation to the use of language referred to, according to a well worn moral distinction, is *material* whenever the objective standards of honesty are violated, even though the person involved is entirely honest in intention and does not realize the objective bearing of his practice. But this violation of objective standards becomes personally or *formally* dishonest only when the individual concerned is aware of his violation of them. The bishops were obviously treating of objective stand-

ards of honesty, and of the *material* aspect of their violation; and they spoke undeniable truth when they treated the attack on doctrines professed in the creeds as violating the standards referred to, and as exposing its violators to the *suspicion and danger* of dishonesty, that is, of personal dishonesty. That such danger is thus actualized in Modernist practice they did not at all assert. I think that most men of disinterested standpoint who reckon fully with the facts referred to by the bishops will agree with them.

I think that the Modernists are personally sincere, and have really persuaded themselves that the objective standards of honesty permit their attack on Church doctrine while retaining the Church's ministry. My contention, and I think I have given adequate reasons for it, is that they are patently mistaken. The subtleties of their defence show that their attitude is at least difficult to square with the standards of conduct elsewhere generally accepted. Their emphasis on mental integrity in personal inquiry and open maintenance of its results is not less totally irrelevant to questions of official relation to a specific propaganda because of the sacredness of the mental integrity referred to—a sacredness which Churchmen at large generally recognize. And the counter charge that men dutifully maintain certain of the Church's doctrines only by sacrificing mental integrity may be dismissed as unworthy of notice.

In the great crowd, there may be insincere defenders of orthodox doctrine, but they are certainly exceptions to the rule.

5. *Clerical Discipline*

In relation to clerical discipline in cases of error in doctrine, I shall be recapitulating principles already defended in these pages when I lay down three determinative premises. The *first* is that the Church, considered as an organized propaganda, has the right, and for self-protection the necessity, of exercising such discipline as will preserve its propaganda from disaster. The *second* is that wise discretion will prevent undertaking this discipline without urgent reason in each case, a certain amount of toleration, or official non-cognizance, of error being obviously desirable. The *third* is that such toleration leaves the canon law standing, and does not in the slightest degree reduce either the obligations of those whose vagaries are ignored or the continued validity of the Church's disciplinary legislation. I need not repeat my arguments for these propositions.

The policy of toleration has notably prevailed in this Church, and heresy hunting has not been customary with any section of Churchmen, certainly not among conservative Churchmen in general. There

have been very few heresy trials in our history; and each of them has been due to public and obstinate attacks on fundamental Church doctrine, widely recognized as too dangerous in influence to be safely ignored. No calm student of the history of this Church can truly gainsay this assertion. Some of our Modernists, however, attack the whole system of trials for heresy as an antiquated form of tyranny. Of course, if the Church's right and necessity to protect one of its chief functions from destruction by its official agents is real—I need not repeat my argument for its reality—the only plausible line of argument against heresy trials must be against that *form* of discipline, as distinguished from other forms.

The question, then, is the fitness of heresy trials in the Church's protection of its propaganda against destructive attacks by its ministers. A common objection is the scandal involved and the fact that a heresy trial advertises the heretical doctrine in the Church at large. It is a realization of these attendant evils which explains the reluctance with which the Church proceeds in this manner; but there are counter considerations. The scandal of publicly avowed heresy on the part of a Church minister already exists, and failure to meet the emergency in a manner equally observable by the faithful both increases the scandal and confuses the faith of many.

Moreover, if a heresy trial advertises heresy, it also makes clear, if conviction results, that it is heresy—a fact important under the circumstances for the faithful to know. There is the argument of charity for the minister put on trial, an argument which applies to the need of sympathetic methods of dealing with him so long as there is any prospect of his recovery, but ceases to apply in case of obstinacy. It is false charity to favour an obdurate offending minister at the cost of obscuring the Church's teaching to the faithful at large.

In the discussion of heresy trials a vital aspect of their purpose is widely overlooked. The right of a defendant to be heard by his peers before being dealt with by his superiors as guilty is involved; and it is respect for this right which leads the Church to provide for heresy trials rather than permit its bishops to discipline heretical ministers without trial. If trials were wholly abolished only two alternatives would remain—either a private and autocratic method of episcopal procedure, which would be more open to attack than that of a trial, or the Church's renunciation of right to protect its propaganda by discipline even in the most extreme emergencies, a course which in time would destroy that propaganda. Truth is no doubt mighty and will *finally* prevail; but its *present* clear publication to the faithful is a controlling purpose in the whole

constitution and canon law of the Episcopal Church. To surrender this purpose would be revolutionary. In the meantime, it determines in fundamental particulars the obligations of ministers and laymen alike.

CHAPTER XII

THE CATHOLIC CREEDS

1. *Modernist View of Them*

THE Modernist rejection of the permanent validity of any possible dogmatic definitions comes to a head in relation to this Church's imposition of the so-called Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Modernists acknowledge their value as registering important stages of doctrinal development in the Church; but consider that modern knowledge and thought have transcended them, and that they cannot be sincerely accepted to-day unless freedom is given to interpret them symbolically. Many Modernists would prefer to have their public recitation abolished, and would like them to be put away in ecclesiastical archives. Before discussing their views and proposals, however, it is desirable to give a brief summary of the development, purpose and characteristics of these creeds.

2. *Their Development*

Both of them represent in their existing forms the development of earlier and briefer local creeds,

this development consisting partly of insertions designed to shut out certain heresies, and partly of such as were involved in the process by which other Eastern creeds gave way to that called "Nicene," and other Western creeds were displaced by that called "Apostles'." [1] The Old Roman Creed, from which the latter developed, was certainly in established use before 150 A. D. Zahn dates it as far back as 120 A. D., and Kattenbusch 100 A. D. It corresponds in general structure to our Apostles' Creed, and contains the articles of the Virgin Birth and Resurrection of our Lord and of the resurrection of the flesh. Creeds of corresponding structure were in use in the East in the third century, the dates of their origin being obscure; and those of Cæsarea and Jerusalem afforded basis for the text of the Nicene Creed. The article on the Virgin Birth first appears in this creed in the form accepted in 451 A. D. by the Council of Chalcedon, although that doctrine is known to have been handed down in the East at least from sub-apostolic days. It is clear that the names "Nicene" and "Apostles'" do not determine the origin of either creed in its final form.

[1] On the Apostles' Creed, see H. B. Swete, *Apos. Creed;* A. E. Burn, *Apos. Creed;* and *Introd. to the Hist. of the Creeds;* C. H. Turner, *Hist. of the Use of Creeds and Anathemas in the Early Church.* On the Nicene Creed: E. C. S. Gibson, *The Three Creeds; Encyc. of Relig. and Ethics, q. v.;* F. J. A. Hort, *Two Dissertations.*

None the less, both agree with apostolic tradition; and the existing Nicene Creed, except for the Western addition of the Holy Spirit's procession from the Son, *Filioque,* runs true with that adopted by the Council of Nicea, 325 A. D. The inclusion of the Virgin Birth at Chalcedon was not an innovation on previous consent.

The early creeds above mentioned owed their origin to the need of authoritative terms in the instruction of catechumens or candidates for Baptism. This need is reflected in the New Testament in the exhortation to "hold fast to the form of sound words";[2] and this exhortation may reasonably be taken to show that the process which gave birth to creeds began in apostolic days. Their basis, arguing from their common structure, appears to have been the trinitarian language of our Lord's baptismal commission to the Apostles.[3] During the age of persecution, previous to the decree of toleration, 313 A. D., however, it was not considered safe to commit these creeds to writing; and this largely explains the obscurity of their earliest history.

3. *Their Purpose*

Their original purpose, then, was to afford accurate instruction of candidates for Baptism in the

[2] II Tim. i, 13.
[3] St. Matt. xxviii, 19.

more determinative particulars of the common faith which they were required to profess before being admitted to Christian fellowship. It is true that in the earliest years after Pentecost converts were freely admitted to Baptism on simple acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as Lord, along with the safeguard of their continuing "stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and the prayers." [4] But erroneous ideas of Christian doctrine soon began to trouble the Church; and in developing the original acceptance of Christ as Lord into a more definitive "form of sound words," the apostolic Church was profiting by experience.

History clearly shows that the danger which thus led to the development and general requirement of a more definitive profession of faith in the primitive Church is a continuing one; and it was never more in evidence than to-day. The present agitation for reducing this requirement plainly grows out of desire to escape the anciently recognized obligation of Christians to accept the primitive faith fully and without reserve. In final analysis, the objection to imposing definitive creeds represents objection to responsibility for a definite and determinative faith. It is certain that to remove from the Office for Baptism the requirement of acceptance of the

[4] Acts ii, 42.

articles of the Apostles' Creed would be interpreted by Modernists as exempting the baptized from such responsibility.

4. *Some Characteristic Aspects*

(*a*) The Apostles and Nicene Creeds are *limited in scope,* and do not define every doctrine contained in the Church's faith. For example, the doctrine concerning the Holy Eucharist, given in the Catechism, is not there mentioned. They were never intended to be exhaustive, and include only the *leading* articles of faith. By "leading" articles I mean such as are sufficiently central and determinative to lead those who rightly accept them to implicit acceptance at least of the rest of the faith. Right acceptance means of course dutiful and loyal acceptance, growing out of conversion and grace and characterized by readiness to believe all the faith implicitly at least, and explicitly so far as ascertained. A grudging faith is foreign to the Christian mind.

(*b*) This limitation of scope exhibits *the caution of the Church* in formally defining its doctrine in fixed terms. Its dogmas are confined to what is most central and most in need of protection from misleading definition. By comparing the Catholic creeds with modern Confessions of Faith we shall see how severe this self-restraint has been.

(*c*) The rise of heresies led in the period of the Ecumenical Councils to the insertion of terms borrowed from current use, and *reflecting Greek forms of thought,* and many moderns complain of their metaphysical implications. This complaint is not justified, for in inserting the terms in question the Church did not affirm any other doctrine than that already contained in the Creed and received from the Apostles. It used them patently and exclusively to make clear in terms incapable of evasion the full Deity of Christ and His unity of being with God the Father. To read more into these terms is to confuse their use in the creed with their use in other contexts.

(*d*) The creeds in time came to be recited in public services, because of their notable fitness for devotional use; and that fitness is gloriously apparent to all who truly accept them. But their public recitation has become an important safeguard of faith in the midst of modern confusion. To abolish or make optional this recitation—especially if it were done on Modernist grounds—would be to weaken the Church's witness, and would give the impression that acceptance of the creeds has ceased to be taught by the Church as necessary. The results might well be chaotic and revolutionary.

CHAPTER XIII

INTERPRETATION OF THE CREEDS

1. *The Modernist Plea*

UNTIL recently it has been generally taken for granted that when a Church requires specific doctrinal professions from its members or ministers, the making of these professions signifies acceptance of the doctrine originally meant to be expressed and imposed by them. Accordingly, no one has been supposed to make such professions sincerely unless he has intended to accept this doctrine without reserve. Modernists, however, have developed a novel theory concerning these professions and obligations. They have persuaded themselves (*a*) that no dogmatic definitions can be permanently valid in their original meaning; (*b*) that even conservative Churchmen do not accept all the articles of the Catholic creeds with unchanged meaning; (*c*) that in openly interpreting and accepting some of them symbolically, and in other than their original sense, they are simply using avowedly a liberty for which the general, although

unreflecting and therefore unavowed, practice of today affords precedent and justification.

I have already expressed the opinion that they have really persuaded themselves on these lines, and that they are honest in their present course and argument. None the less, it seems plain that their argument is doubly open to suspicion in not being wholly disinterested, and in setting novel subtleties against the normal, readily perceived and generally accepted purpose and meaning of doctrinal subscriptions. It is entirely clear that this Church has intended to propagate without substantial change a faith which it holds to have been once for all delivered and to have been correctly defined in its leading elements in the Catholic creeds. It is also certain that a main intention of this Church's imposition of ministerial subscriptions and ordination vows is to protect the propaganda of the ancient faith from change. No one who has not been enveloped in confusing sophistications is likely to deny this. In brief, the Modernist argument in this matter really makes for an ingenious but unwarranted evasion of the official intention of the Church as embodied in its constitutional legislation. And it is the Church's constitutionally established purpose, rather than Modernist contentions, that must determine what is involved for loyal Churchmen in its imposition of the Catholic creeds.

2. *Fixed and Progressive Interpretation*

(*a*) The Modernist plea for liberty to interpret the creeds progressively cannot rightly be understood without clearing up the meaning of the term "interpretation." *To interpret a formulary or law may, and in official use ordinarily does, signify to ascertain and define the precise meaning of it considered in itself, the meaning with which it was actually imposed.* This use of the term appears in judicial interpretation of civil law. The aim in this is to determine the meaning of the law itself, the provable meaning of its actual language. The effective meaning of a law is considered to be determined by its language, closely scrutinized, regardless of sentiments and intentions which are not provably expressed therein. Thus the so-called "joker," or phrase secretly interpolated in a law contrary to the intention of the majority, is reckoned as part of the law and determinative of its meaning. Moreover, the courts assume that this meaning, the legislative result, remains unchanged until subsequent legislation either amends or repeals the law.

Similarly, to interpret an imposed formulary of faith in relation to its effect on canonical obligation, is to define the meaning of the formulary itself, the provable meaning of its language as therein used and thereby imposed. It is not concerned either

with opinions prevailing when the formulary was adopted or with bearings and inferences likely to be made from it in any current state of knowledge concerning related matters, except so far as explicitly and provably expressed by the language of the formulary itself. Only this provable meaning of the language employed has *ecclesiastical* force,[1] but it retains this force so long as the formulary is imposed without amendment. The ecclesiastical courts thus normally "interpret" the creeds; and it was in this sense that our bishops in 1894–5 rightly declared that "fixedness of interpretation is of the essence of the creeds." [2] Unless it were so, their imposition could have no continuing value for protecting doctrine from subversion—a *reductio ad absurdum.*

(*b*) There is another use of the word "interpretation," however, that which *includes in its reference not only the meaning of the document itself, strictly taken, but also all its apparent bearings and implications when regarded from the standpoint of current knowledge and opinion on other subjects.* Inasmuch as such knowledge increases and as a result many accepted opinions undergo change and correction, this kind of interpretation also changes,

[1] The Church does indeed teach a wider range of doctrine, but not by creed prescription.

[2] Journal of the General Convention of 1895, p. 417.

growing more rich and intelligent as the ages roll on. In this sense, accordingly, interpretation of the creeds is progressive.

To illustrate, the Apostles' Creed says, "I believe in God the Father, maker of heaven and earth," enlarged in the Nicene Creed by the explanatory phrase, "And of all things visible and invisible." If we interpret in the first sense, the meaning of the article itself, we find the doctrine that God is the maker of all things, and that is what it means as long as the article retains its existing phraseology. But most ancient Christians also believed that the world was made in six days, and that the existing forms of organic life were then given their abiding characters. Therefore they put the doctrine that God is maker of all into the context of these opinions concerning the manner of creation, and did not often distinguish between the article of faith and the opinions in which they enveloped it. Accordingly, when modern science discredited these extraneous opinions, it seemed to many Christian believers that science was opposed to the article of faith concerning creation. Theologians, however, have been led to distinguish and to see that what is really discredited is the extraneous body of opinion concerning the universe which had been read into the creed, but which is not at all expressed there. They have been led to revise their previous ideas of the *bear-*

ings of its language; and in this sense they have interpreted the creed progressively, without in the least changing the interpretation which has to do with the creed's strict meaning in itself.

The mistake which Modernists make is to suppose that the meaning of the creed itself, the doctrine which it provably asserts, is changed because the mental context in which we receive it, and the inferences which our extraneous knowledge and opinions lead us to draw from it, have altered. They fail, in other words, to define their use of "interpret." They fail to realize that no change of context supplied by us can change what the creed itself really and provably asserts. The creed does not bind, as creed, except in its own strict meaning, but in that meaning it continues to bind those who accept the creed, as creed, at all. In brief, *progressive interpretation in the sense I have indicated is legitimate, provided it is not confused with interpretation in the stricter sense, and made to involve change and reversal of the creed's own meaning, the meaning in which the Church imposes it.*

3. *Symbolical Interpretation*

Modernists declare that no intelligent believers now accept all the articles of the creed in their original meaning—an assertion which I shall criti-

cize further on—and argue from this premise that the creed cannot retain its original force unless interpreted symbolically. In discussing this contention we need to realize what is at issue. No one contends that there is no figurative language in the creed. For example, "the right hand of the Father" cannot be, and never has been, taken literally by believers in general. The point here maintained is that *articles of the creed are to be accepted in the sense in which they were provably imposed, whether that sense is literal or figurative.* And in the past no serious difference of opinion has arisen among believers as to what is literal and what is figurative. But Modernists contend that the established practice of interpreting certain creed language figuratively leaves us free to apply the same method of interpretation to other phrases of the creed, for example to the article concerning the Virgin Birth. In brief, they plead for a symbolical interpretation which reverses the original and plain meaning of parts of the creed—a branch of their use of progressive interpretation to relieve themselves from some of their generally acknowledged responsibility for accepting the creeds in their previously accepted meaning.

The creed has widely been called the "Symbol of Faith." But the word "symbol" as thus used, and as generally used among the ancients, does not mean

metaphor or figure of speech, as opposed to literal phrase. It means language which is inadequate to express exhaustively the mystery with which it is concerned. It is language that is true as far as it goes, a "form of sound words" on the subject, but which points on to more than can be expressed in human language.[3] Thus the word "heaven" correctly designates the place where Christ is to receive His faithful ones forever, and is therefore a permanently valid term. But where heaven is, and any exact description of it, are beyond any adequate expression. In this use of terms the whole creed is "symbolical," inadequate. But, *as far as it goes,* it is given as abidingly true; some of it, as being concerned with earthly facts, literally so, and some of it patently figurative. In either case the meaning in which it was imposed is the meaning in which it is to be accepted.

Modernists, however, use "symbolical" in the sense of non-literal. Thus they claim the right in accepting the creeds to interpret the article concerned with the Virgin Birth as signifying, not literal fact but, the purity and dignity of Him who was in fact born of both Joseph and Mary. In brief, they *reverse* the literal and real meaning of that article. It is this reversal of the previously acknowledged meaning of articles of the creeds, the meaning with

[3] Cf. A. Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma,* vol. II, p. 144.

which this Church has been understood to impose them, which is at issue. Even if, contrary to our convictions, we should grant that intelligent men can no longer accept the creed in the original meaning with which patently it has been imposed, the fact would remain that only this Church itself has authority to determine in what sense the creed is to be accepted as condition of membership and ministerial office within its spiritual jurisdiction. Until this Church, therefore, legislates otherwise, the creed retains the meaning with which it was originally received and imposed in our Book of Common Prayer. The Modernist movement has no effect whatever in changing the Church's plain constitutional requirements, as they have been hitherto understood by Churchmen in general. Arguments and demands do not change the canon law; and until it is changed it determines the requirements of loyalty for those who seek to retain their place or office in this Church.

4. *Unchanged Meaning of the Creed*

I now come to reckon with the Modernist assertion that no intelligent Churchmen of any school accept all the articles of the creed in their ancient meaning. I begin by recalling the very real difference between the provable meaning of the language

employed in the creed and the mental context of current knowledge and opinion to which believers of each successive age seek to relate its several articles. The theology that has been built up around the creed is a progressive science and has changed with the changes of general knowledge and opinion. And because the difference between what is required to be believed by the creed and the inferences and bearings which each generation has linked up therewith has not usually been clearly kept in mind in Christian thought, Modernists have easily overlooked it. They treat every change in theological comment on the creed as signifying a change in the meaning which the creed itself has for successive generations of believers. My contention is that, amid all changes of mental context and associated opinion in which its several articles have been received, the creed's own provable meaning remains. And it still defines without change beliefs to which Christians in general regard themselves to be committed when they accept the creed. No doubt they also in many cases read into the creed more than it contains. But what it really has contained and meant in itself it still accepted by them.

The affirmations of the Apostles' Creed are of three kinds.

(*a*) One of them has to do with historic events witnessed and attested by our Lord's parents and

the apostolic writers: His birth of the Virgin Mary, suffering under Pontius Pilate, crucifixion, death, burial, rising again on the third day from the dead, and that part of His ascension into heaven that was observed by His disciples—into a cloud. That these events were originally, and still are, intended to be affirmed as literal facts—that such is the real meaning of their assertion in the creed—is too clear to be explained away by "symbolical" interpretation, however spiritual such interpretation may be made to appear. Being affirmations of fact susceptible of observation, originally based upon firsthand testimony seriously meant to be literal, they must be taken literally and either accepted as true or rejected as untrue. This has been the manner of their treatment from the beginning; and *the Modernist attempt to impose a "symbolical" interpretation on such of them as require supernatural factors for their occurrence is plainly not due to a better understanding of the creed. It is due to a priori considerations and to the influence of modern naturalistic or semi-naturalistic presuppositions; and the new interpretations reverse the meaning of the creed* with reference to the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection and the Ascension. They deny facts notoriously meant to be asserted by the creed as facts. *The great bulk of those who profess to accept the creed, accept these factual assertions in their*

ancient and original intent. It is idle to deny this.

(*b*) Another class of affirmations deals with truths lying back of these facts, truths revealed by Christ and His Holy Spirit, which declare somewhat of the nature of God and of His purpose for mankind, and which help us to perceive why the events referred to were brought to pass. Thus in each of the three main sections of the creed we express our belief in one of the divine Persons, referring to each in terms not proper to mere creatures, but none the less consistent with the truth specifically mentioned in the Nicene Creed, that there is only "one God." In the Nicene Creed the true Deity of Christ, His distinctness from, and oneness in being with, the Father, are declared in technical terms borrowed from ancient usage, no longer current; but that nothing beyond these truths was affirmed or intended to be affirmed is made clear both by fair examination of the creed itself and by consideration of the Arian heresy that historically was intended to be excluded.

The affirmations of this class include also our Lord's conception by the Holy Ghost, His descent into hell, ascent into heaven, and sitting at God's right hand; and that Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead, that there is forgiveness of sins, that the flesh will rise, and that there will be everlasting life. The Nicene Creed adds that

Christ's second coming will be "with glory," certain ascriptions to the Spirit that have undergone no change in meaning, and that Baptism is for remission of sins.

With regard to the descent into hell and ascent into heaven, Modernists say that to the ancients and mediævals this meant local descent into the interior of the earth and local ascent into a region above the clouds; whereas we do not give either hell or heaven any such localization. The correct statement is that the earlier views referred to are not explicit in the creed, but were read into it from popular cosmology. The words "descended" and "ascended" were used even in ancient days in both the local-direction sense and the purely spiritual one; and the only affirmations provably contained in these articles—no other have ever been binding—are that *Christ went to hell and went to heaven. In these meanings conservative believers still accept these articles;* and the current interpretation of hell as the place of departed spirits is not modern in origin. The ascent into heaven, so far as physically meant, has always been taken as referring to the Gospel fact of our Lord's visible levitation into a cloud; and in ultimate reference, this visible movement has been generally regarded as a sign of His withdrawal into God's invisible heaven. No view concerning either the locality or the local nature of hell and

heaven can be proved ever to have had the authority of a Catholic creed.

The phrase "resurrection of the flesh," as the original of the Apostles' Creed reads, has very limited content, and this content is not at all changed by substituting, as the English have done, "body" for "flesh," *carnis*. In either case the assertion is that the inferior visible part of our nature, as well as the superior invisible part, will rise. In what state and under what antecedent conditions it will rise is not even hinted at. The word "flesh" may have been chosen to accentuate the distinctness of that which is referred to from its inhabiting spirit. The substituted "body" seems to accentuate the organic aspect. But both designate the same *thing,* and concerning that thing nothing is asserted except its resurrection. In that its only provable meaning both ancient and modern believers have accepted this article. The change of interpretation referred to by Modernists has been confined to the inferences deduced from the article, to passing opinions not expressed in the creed. In the then state of physical knowledge the ancients supposed that a resurrection of the flesh requires a reassemblage of its constituent particles; and, controlled by this notion, they developed a theory of the resurrection which modern knowledge has discredited. Modern theology also puts greater stress on the scriptural

truth, neither stated nor precluded by the creed, that in the resurrection, "when this mortal shall have put on immortality," our bodies will be marvelously changed. So it is that, while our theological treatment of the "resurrection of the flesh" greatly differs from that of the ancients, we accept that article itself in the only provable meaning it ever has had.

(*c*) The third kind of affirmation in the creed includes "the Holy Catholic Church" and "the communion of saints." These go together, and have always been taken in the same sense except among modern Protestants. The "Catholic Church" designates the visible Church organized by the Apostles and acknowledged by the Ecumenical Councils. In that we still profess to believe when we recite the creeds. The "communion of saints" referred when inserted, and is still taken to refer, to the relations which bind together the baptized members of Christ's Catholic Church. The emphasis has sometimes been on earthly fellowship, but more commonly on the uninterrupted communion between living and departed saints. The word "saint" in both scriptural and ancient Christian use is an ordinary designation of the baptized, reckoned as sanctified, consecrated to God.

The conclusion of the matter is that the Modernist assertion that no section of Churchmen accepts the articles of the creed in their original ancient

meaning is mistaken. It is based upon failure to distinguish between what these articles, strictly scrutinized, provably affirm and the speculative and changing theological opinions that have been linked up with them in the several stages of men's advance in general knowledge.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FULL GODHEAD OF CHRIST

1. *The Nicene Doctrine*

The Nicene Creed defines the traditional Christian doctrine as to Christ's Person as follows: "One Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made."

This language, especially the phrase, "Being of one substance with the Father," is objected to by Modernists as including metaphysical ideas in the faith. This is a mistake. Whatever may have been the previous metaphysical associations of the terms in question, they had become current coin among the intelligent of all schools. Their meaning in the creed is necessarily determined by their context, and by the intention there manifest of asserting as unambiguously as possible the truth that Jesus Christ is not less to be identified in being with

the one God because personally distinct from the Father. The background—I do not mean the content—of the language used is twofold: the infinite otherness of God and creatures; and the trinitarian doctrine that in the one and only divine and indivisible Being there are three distinct although mutually inseparable personal Subjects, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Modernists criticize both of these premises. Obviously I cannot discuss their criticisms in detail in a book of this kind. I only need to say that in assailing the essential otherness of Godhead and manhood, they reveal clearly how fundamental is their departure from the Christian faith, since it leads to a reduced idea of God Himself. The notion that this infinite otherness of nature must preclude the assumption of real manhood by very God is purely *a priori.* The Christian doctrine from New Testament days has been that such assumption actually took place when the eternal Son condescended to be born of the Virgin Mary.

2. *Anticipated in the New Testament*

In thus defining the doctrine of Christ's Person the Nicene fathers were compelled, in order to shut out new errors, to use new terms; but the aim to which they adhered, was simply to declare the doc-

trine handed down from the Apostles by common tradition of the Churches. The Apostles had received their doctrine by supernatural revelation from Christ and His Holy Spirit; and they received it by a complex process having several stages, and not completed during our Lord's earthly life.[1]

(*a*) The manner of the Man as observed at close range in daily intimacy—truly human, indeed, but exhibiting a spiritual transcendence of character and a sovereignty in every word and work that could not have sat naturally upon Him, as it did, if He had been merely human.

(*b*) His amazing personal claims, unendurably presumptuous if He was not personally divine, but made entirely convincing by His moral perfection, transparent truthfulness, mental balance and superhuman wisdom.

(*c*) His unique resurrection from the dead, which among its other bearings declared Him to be "the Son of God with power."

By their observance of these things our Lord's disciples had gradually come to a manner and degree of unreserved self-committal and devotion to Him which may not rightly be yielded to any other than the Supreme Being. They were treating Him as

[1] On this process, see Bishop Gore, *Belief in Christ,* esp. chh. ii–iv.

God. But this attitude was implicit rather than the outcome of an articulate Christology. That could not come until the self-manifestation of Christ could be reflected on in the light of the demonstrative work and guidance of the Spirit. Accordingly, there was another stage.

(*d*) The outpouring of spiritual power and felt personal regeneration that was perceived and experienced in the apostolic Church, recognized in the light of Christ's promises and of the Spirit's pentecostal descent in tongues of fire to be from their ascended Master.

It is customary to describe the process of development of the Apostles' definitive realization of what their experience of, and established attitude towards, Christ signified with regard to His rank in being as having three stages—the Petrine, Pauline, and Johannine. We should notice, however, that these were stages in a spiritually guided and self-consistent progress in articulating the meaning of an implicit faith and attitude towards Christ which had become entirely and abidingly established with the pentecostal descent of the Spirit. The Johannine Christology was implicit in the Petrine. The contention, therefore, that there were three different Christologies in the apostolic Church—adoptionist, preëxistent-Christ, and Logos—is to confuse stages in the unfolding of one Christology

with mutually independent developments. There is no trace of controversy touching Christ's Person among the leaders of the apostolic Church, such as would have certainly been in evidence if the view I am criticizing were true. And it is fatuous to treat St. Peter's opening missionary sermon—patently apologetical, and addressed to people who would have been startled and shocked by being told that Christ was God—as if it were a full exposition of his belief concerning the Person of Christ.

The doctrine of Christ's divine Person had to be taught in language consistent with the established truth of divine unity. Accordingly, to the end, even while declaring with increasing clearness the divine rank of Christ, the apostolic writers habitually designated and described Him, and the Holy Spirit as well, in terms of relationship to the Father—thus providing their successors with the materials which were gradually coördinated in the formula of the Trinity.

It ought to be clear, in view of what I have pointed out in this section, that the Christology of the Nicene Creed, in spite of its developed terminology, adds nothing to the undeniable and self-consistent teaching of the New Testament in ascribing the eternal Godhead of the Father to His Son Jesus Christ.

3. *"Different Gates to One Faith"*

Supporters of Modernism define their position as a mental attitude rather than a doctrine, and point to the fact that Modernists can be found who have made no important departure from traditional doctrine. This seems encouraging until we examine this "mental attitude." It is one of refusal to reckon seriously with authority and the main stream of Christian tradition. The premise adopted is that the progress of human knowledge and thought, of science and criticism, precludes resting in the finality of a faith given long ago, of dogmas based upon conceptions of God and His world now entirely outgrown. If such an attitude is not doctrinal in the sense of signifying or involving any positive doctrinal platform, it is none the less decidedly doctrinal in its negative aspects. Its premise, if it were valid, would justify the position, actually adopted by the more consistent Modernists, that what is called the faith once for all delivered is in need of substantial revision and reconstruction, just because developed in a remote, unscientific and uncritical age. The traditional assumption that the faith came to men through supernatural revelation rather than human discovery, and therefore does not depend for its validity upon the results of human investigation, is not seriously reckoned with. It is

rejected by consistent Modernists, who treat traditional doctrines as mere hypotheses, registers of previous stages in progressive thought, now needing revision, in certain cases sheer reversal.

Some of our American supporters of the Modernist cause, including Dr. Parks, seem to be oblivious of this, the real standpoint and attitude of Modernism. They fondly suppose that Modernism represents merely freedom of scholarship and the right to reckon with modern knowledge in theological development. They have unwittingly allied themselves with anti-Christian forces. Consistent Modernists definitely reject the miraculous events affirmed in the creed, and their symbolical interpretation is a reversal, rather than a more intelligent acceptance, of its several doctrines, including that of our Lord's preëxistent Godhead.

Dr. Bowie entirely overlooks the Modernist novel and misleading use of terms when he writes, "Conservative and liberal alike would agree that in Him they find the fulness of the godhead bodily, and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. But the difference has to do with the question of approaches, whether one or more than one, by which men enter into this conviction of God in Christ." [2] The text "God was in Christ," etc. is

[2] "Different Gates to One Faith," in *The Forum,* June, 1924, p. 760.

being used to-day in support of the Unitarian view that *God dwelt in the purely human person Jesus,* and thus used Him for reconciling the world to Himself. They also similarly use the text, "the fulness of the Godhead," revealed in Him. Moreover, the term Godhead does not mean for Modernists, as it has always meant for Christian believers, a unique and infinite nature differing in kind from anything that can become the property of a human personal subject.[3]

Modernists frequently assail the traditional Christian view of Godhead as making an impassable gulf between God and man, and insist upon the view that Godhead and Manhood are one nature in Christ. The doctrine of two natures they call "hopelessly dualistic." Dr. Drown writes, "The difference between God and man is not a difference in attributes, but in source. God gives all, and man can receive all. The Christian belief in God and in man leads to the belief in the complete unity of God and man. The accomplishment of that unity in Jesus Christ is the Incarnation." [4] In two of the Essays recently produced by the faculty of the Cambridge Divinity School, it is maintained that the doctrine of our

[3] The modern contention that the difference is one of degree, also that the unity of Christ with the Father is to be described in terms of will rather than of substance, is effectively criticized by R. A. Knox, *Some Loose Stones,* ch. viii.

[4] E. S. Drown, *The Creative Christ,* p. 86.

Lord's personal preëxistence disagrees with the Virgin Birth narratives, which teach, they allege, that Christ *derived His being* from human birth.[5] If Christ was not preëxistent—Dr. Drown is content with the "thought that all this preëxistent divine activity is summed up in Jesus Christ" [6]—He could not be what Christians have always meant in calling Him divine.

Dr. Bowie's eirenicon is only a verbal platform. If it were subscribed to by genuine Modernists and genuine conservatives, their united subscriptions would not signify agreement. It would conceal very fundamental disagreement in the most central article of the Christian faith. Moreover, on the Modernist side it would represent what is called Neologism, a new use of the terms previously and generally employed and understood to express traditional doctrine. It is this manipulation of words—called "progressive interpretation" when applied to the creeds—which puts every eirenicon offered in Modernist interests under suspicion. The question is not what skilfully formed verbiage is accepted by Mod-

[5] *Creeds and Loyalty,* by Seven Members of the Faculty of Cambridge Theol. School, pp. 61, 78.

[6] *Op. cit.,* p. 89. Other illustrations of reduced Modernist Christology can be found in Frederic Palmer, *The Virgin Birth,* pp. 23–31; H. D. A. Major, in *The Modern Churchman,* Sept., 1921, pp. 195 ff.; and several of the conference papers given in the same issue of that magazine, esp. that of the late Dr. Rashdall.

ernists, but what does the verbiage mean? Have real Modernists abandoned the doctrine of Christ's eternal being and Godhead—the doctrine, that is, which in the ages gone by has constituted the most central and distinguishing element of the Christian faith? The evidence that they have done so is sufficiently extensive and convincing.

I do not mean that Dr. Bowie, Dr. Parks and some of the others who are rallying to the defence of Modernism reject the Christian doctrine referred to. I mean that these gentlemen are undesignedly lending help to an anti-Christian movement. Modernism is a term that has been appropriated very definitely to signify what I have shown it to signify in my second chapter. Recent attempts to use the term as designating merely an openminded outlook simply obscure the issues involved in that most vital controversy now going on between those who believe and those who reject several most central articles of the Christian faith. The point of view of genuine Modernism is hopelessly inconsistent with the historic Christian faith, and no truly Christian believer can profess acceptance of it without putting himself in a false light. The Modernist and the conservative positions are not "gates to one faith." They are mutually discordant faiths, and their verbal agreement in accepting Christ conceals a disagreement concerning His Person too radical safely to

be ignored. In the hitherto accepted, or historically Christian, sense of words, true Modernists do not accept Jesus Christ as very God, or even as personally existent previously to His human birth.

CHAPTER XV

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

1. *Standpoints*

RELATEDNESS to the general course of events, as has been explained in a previous chapter, is a necessary condition of credibility of such a fact as that of the Virgin Birth;[1] but if this relatedness is to be discerned by us, we must assume the standpoint from which alone it becomes apparent. This standpoint is determined by two premises: (*a*) that the strictly miraculous nature of an event does not *of itself* make such an event contrary to nature, *contra naturam,* or a breach of continuity in the divine drama of which the phenomena generalized by nat-

[1] There is a large literature on both sides. Dr. Parks gives most of the adverse arguments, which are more fully given by Paul Lobstein, *The Virgin Birth of Christ.* On the conservative side, see G. H. Box, *The Virgin Birth of Jesus;* T. J. Thorburn, *Crit'l Exam. of the Evidence for the Doctr. of the V. B.;* C. A. Briggs, *Theol. Symbolics,* pp. 52–60; V. Rose, *Studies on the Gospels,* ch. ii; Leonard Prestige, *The V. B. of our Lord;* Jas. Orr, *The V. B. of Christ;* and many others. Among German defenders of the fact may be mentioned F. K. L. Steinmayer, 1873; B. Weiss, 1884; A. H. Cremer, 1893; Th. Zahn, 1893 and since; G. Wohlenberg, 1893; J. Hausleiter; Ph. Bachmann; and Grützmacher.

ural science constitute but a part; (*b*) that the event itself, being the taking of our nature by a *preëxistent* divine Person, is not correctly viewed as a case of human procreation, presumably subject in physical method to the universally observed law of such procreation; but is a unique act of God, the phenomenal aspect of which is likely also to be unique. It is, of course, necessary that the event should be supported by evidence; but the sufficiency of the evidence of the Virgin Birth cannot rightly be estimated if these premises are disregarded or rejected.[2]

They are disregarded by Modernists under the influence of contrary presuppositions, which *close their minds* to the possibility, or at least the credibility of the event—close them in a way that makes their claim to the "open mind," and ascription to conservative believers of the "closed mind," a pathetic absurdity.

(*a*) Their initial presupposition is that the birth of Jesus must have been governed by the laws of human procreation, which would be violated by the exclusion of human paternity. This is, of course, a naturalistic assumption, not at all susceptible of proof by natural science.

[2] This does not mean that the evidence which convinced the apostolic Church is all available *to us*. The New Testament nowhere seeks *to prove* the Virgin Birth, and the Gospel narratives *in re* are but *witnesses to established fact*, written not for gainsayers but for believers.

(*b*) Their second presupposition is that the Person Jesus Christ *derived His being* from human conception and birth, and was not preëxistent God. That is, they reject the doctrine of the Incarnation *in substance,* even while professing to accept it *in terms.* That doctrine requires us to believe that the event of Bethlehem was the taking of human nature by the eternal, and therefore preëxistent, only-begotten Son of God. Modernism has developed another doctrine altogether, and only on the basis of a progressive interpretation which reverses the meaning of scriptural and ecclesiastical language can Modernists refute the general truth of Bishop Gore's dictum, that "there are no believers in the Incarnation discoverable who are not believers in the Virgin Birth." [3] A universal negative of this kind cannot, of course, be demonstrated, and there are exceptions; but that *usually* the two beliefs stand or fall together is abundantly verifiable in modern literature.

Of these presuppositions I give two examples. The late Dr. Sanday, in his article on "Jesus Christ" in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible,* and elsewhere, wrote as a believer in the fact of the Virgin Birth; but, as he candidly explains in his pamphlet, *Bishop Gore's Challenge to Criticism,* pp. 21 ff., he came later to reject that fact, because he had come to be-

[3] *Dissertations,* p. 48.

lieve that it was contrary to natural law, *contra naturam*. His explanations show that, while not denying the *power* of God to work such a miracle, he believed it to be incredible that He should *will* to do so, on the ground that it would be "a breach of the physical order." In brief, his loss of faith in the fact was due, not to any new study of the evidence, but to what for him was a new theoretical premise—one pertaining to the naturalistic philosophy, but lying, as many scientists admit, beyond the competence of science as such to establish.

My second example is taken from Frederic Palmer's *The Virgin Birth*. After naively saying that "the Virgin Birth is . . . in no way connected with the divinity of Jesus unless we regard that divinity as material," he writes with strange obliviousness of self-contradiction, "We do not indeed venture to such length as to say that Christ is God, for this would involve the inconceivable assertion that God Almighty was once born and died." [4] What this amounts to is that Professor Palmer approaches the question of the Virgin Birth from the standpoint of rejection of the central Christian doctrine that Christ is very God. Naturally

[4] Page 28. He seems to consider that to ascribe birth and death to one who is God is to ascribe beginning and end *of being* to Him. The eternal Son was born and died as touching the Manhood taken by Him, not as touching His Godhead.

a negative result is inevitable, and his method of argument is made tortuous thereby.

The Modernist attack on the fact of the Virgin Birth is not due to the emergence of new data, nor to any new light which they have brought to bear on the question. It is transparently due to presuppositions which beg the question at the outset, and which close the mind to the state of the question, to the value of the evidence, and to the rational significance of the fact in the history of God's world.

2. *State of the Question*

All beliefs, whatever may have been their previous acceptance, are open at all times to fresh investigation. In this sense no question can ever be closed. The interests of truth are paramount; and it is by repeated investigation, freely conducted, that Christian tradition from time to time is purged by the overruling Spirit of unwarranted accretions. The error of our Modernist clergy does not lie in their plea for freedom in this direction. It lies in their *utilizing the Church's official ministry* to attack the Church's official doctrine; and my whole argument is in vain if it does not also show that Modernists do not reinvestigate such teachings as we are considering in a manner consistent with likelihood of dependable results.

The belief in the fact of the Virgin Birth is an integral part of a broad and uninterrupted stream of tradition which, according to so radical a liberal as Adolf Harnack, who for a reason which I shall consider rejects the fact, "must be traced back to the Churches of Palestine, and must be ascribed to the first decades after the Resurrection." [5] It emerges in the writings of St. Ignatius, 110 A. D., Aristides, about 125 A. D., and Justin Martyr, about 150 A. D.; and it does so in terms which cannot be shown to be wholly traceable to the Gospel narratives. It emerges also in the Old Roman Creed, which according to Harnack was in use as early as 150 A. D., and which according to another Liberal, Dr. Kattenbusch, dates back to 100 A. D. There is no trace of orthodox dissent, and the only known rejectors of the Virgin Birth in the primitive age were the Ebionite rejectors of Christ's divinity and the Gnostic docetists, to whom, of course, there could be no justifying reason for such a birth. That is, their anti-Christian standpoint explains their dissent.

During the many centuries in which our doctrine has held its own among the bulk of Christian believers, its truth has been repeatedly investigated and confirmed, with such methods of enquiry as each age has afforded and by intelligent writers.

[5] *Date of the Acts,* etc., p. 148.

The modern period has brought to light no determinative data which have not been previously available, except such as confirm in general the text and authenticity of the Virgin Birth narratives. And what is most significant of all, perhaps, is the circumstance that the sub-apostolic acceptance of the fact of the Virgin Birth embodied the belief of immediate listeners to the Apostles, who must have possessed more direct and reliable knowledge of the data bearing on the question than the most industrious scholars can hope now to recover.

I do not maintain for a moment that this general stream of tradition itself directly proves the fact of the Virgin Birth. My point is quite different. It is that a general state of belief reaching back uninterruptedly into the period when firsthand testimony for its confirmation or rebuttal was in all likelihood available has to be reckoned with, and cannot reasonably be declared false *until proved* to be so. It determines the state of the question, and places the burden of proof unmistakably on the shoulders of those who deny the Virgin Birth. Modernists who neglect to reckon with this tradition, and fail to give adequate reason for its origin, if false, are not facing all the data. And in saying this I do not in the least depend upon any theory of ecclesiastical authority.

3. *The Evidence*

The fact of the Virgin Birth, the literal reality of which has from within the apostolic age been generally held to be part of the Christian faith, is twofold: that Jesus Christ was conceived and born of the Virgin Mary, without carnal intercourse; and that this was brought about by the Holy Spirit. It has always seemed to Christians to be a suitable method of God's entrance into human history; but this conviction did not originate the belief in the fact, and could not have justified its adoption, if it had not been based upon sufficient evidence—sufficient in the light of all pertinent considerations. If it had been a sheer portent, without rational occasion and significance, for example, sufficient evidence would have meant an overwhelming evidence such as we can expect to find for no event of ancient history. But it was not an irrational portent. In the light of what Christians had learned as to the divine Person of Christ, and therefore as to the significance of His being born in time at all, it was the manner and sign of the taking of our nature by the eternal, preëxistent, Son of God. In that light they estimated the evidence and were convinced by it.

That evidence probably reached an inner circle

of Christians independently of the related Gospel narratives, and before they were published. But the narratives of our Lord's human birth in the first and third Gospels, contain the main, the only direct and explicit, evidence, whether for or against the fact of His Virgin Birth, that is *now* available to those who would freshly examine the subject. These Gospels alone of extant first century records are concerned to tell of our Lord's early life; they both bear clear witness to the Virgin Birth; there is no explicit witness to the contrary; and the story of the Virgin Birth thus publicly given to Christians seems to have provoked no controversy in the Church, although some were living who were in a position to judge on independent grounds whether the story was true or not. Thus these two narratives contain the sum of directly determinative data; and their ready acceptance by the presumably well-informed apostolic Church confirms the belief that they are *dependable* sources for us.

The authenticity and internal integrity, as well as the substantial correctness of the received text, of both narratives have been fully established on critical grounds by the combined labours of many competent scholars. It is also established, (*a*) that both Gospels were written within the apostolic age, the tendency of scholars being to push the dates of their publication backward rather than forward;

(*b*) that the distinctively archaic elements of the narratives indicate use by the Gospel writers of preëxisting material, whether oral or written, seemingly reflecting the conservative Jewish atmosphere of the holy family; (*c*) that while not proved to be mutually contradictory, the narratives are distinctly independent, complementary and mutually corroborative as to the main fact of the Virgin Birth; (*d*) that the standpoint of the story in the first Gospel is that of Joseph, in the third Gospel that of Mary, suggesting that the two narratives came ultimately from these firsthand witnesses. To this must be added the calm sobriety and spiritual elevation of the stories, absolutely inconsistent with any other motive than that of responsible effort to tell the truth. It remains for openminded scholars either to acknowledge the fact attested by these narratives or to bring forward sufficient indirect evidence to the contrary—not forgetting that the early and firm establishment of the traditional belief needs explanation.

This evidence for the Virgin Birth seems to be confirmed by a phrase in the fourth Gospel. Whatever may have been the authorship of this Gospel, and its exactitude in reporting after many years the precise words of Christ, the trend of criticism is to establish the reliable and firsthand nature of the writer's knowledge, and his competence as witness

of established Christian belief towards the end of the apostolic age. He was undoubtedly acquainted with the story of the Virgin Birth; and in view of his quietly correcting the Synoptic Gospels in several instances, he would have been likely to correct them in so serious a matter as this, if he had not believed the Virgin Birth to be a fact. His failure to do so, therefore, seems significant.

Instead of correcting them, he writes of the new birth of the children of God in terms obviously descriptive of a supernatural virgin birth,[6] "Who were born not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God." The translation in our English versions, it is to be observed, does not bring out the closeness of the allusion to virgin birth—an allusion utterly without explanation unless the writer was intentionally likening the regeneration of Christians to the supernatural method of Christ's own human birth. "Not of bloods" (plural), that is not by union of the blood of two parents; "nor by the will of the flesh," that is not by fleshly procreative act; "nor by the will of a man" (the Greek word for man, *andros,* designates not a human being in general, but a male), that is not by paternal human begetting; "but of God," that is by divine intervention.

[6] St. John i. 13.

4. *Objections*

For reasons that will be apparent as we go on, a number of data is discoverable in the Gospels which require explanation to harmonize them with the fact of the Virgin Birth. These are marshalled by certain objectors as so many "evidences" against that fact, and the conclusion is deduced that the view which makes Joseph the natural father of Jesus "may . . . claim for it more extensive Scriptural authority."[7] This is hopelessly untrue. The data requiring explanation do not constitute "evidences" against the Virgin Birth *unless insusceptible of reasonable explanation in harmony therewith.* It will be my task to show that they are susceptible of such explanation, and therefore that *against the fact of the Virgin Birth there can be found in the New Testament no "evidence," in the accepted sense of that word, either direct or indirect. The only real evidence available and pertinent supports the fact.*

(1) The *silence* as to the Virgin Birth of all New Testament writers, except the authors of the two Gospel narratives, is said to afford evidence that they knew nothing of that miracle, and certainly to prove that the Virgin Birth was not em-

[7] F. Palmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

ployed in primitive Gospel preaching as basis of belief in Christ's divine Person.

That it was *not the original basis of belief* in Christ is certainly true; and, as Bishop Gore has recently insisted, it may not rightly be used as such basis now. In that aspect the Virgin Birth is "secondary," as he says—a point to which I shall return. But it is surely not essential to the Virgin Birth being a fact that it should also be the basis of belief in Christ and should have a primary place in Christian apologetic. Its not being thus pushed forward in the first preaching, therefore, affords no evidence whatever against its reality. To this day, even in sermons of the most convinced believers in the fact, the subject is not often discussed or referred to, except when unbelieving attacks provoke defensive argument. And it is the Modernist attack that explains the present prominence of the subject.

The argument from silence is widely recognized to be of no evidential value, unless convincing reasons can be given to prove that those who were silent must have referred to the Virgin Birth, if they were aware of it. No such reasons are here available. The other historical writings begin with our Lord's public ministry or with the establishment of the Church, and therefore have no natural place for the story. St. Mark advertises his starting point as "the beginning of the Gospel of

Jesus Christ," meaning the evangel or public preaching of the good news. The fourth Gospel begins at the same point, and is generally recognized to be supplementary to the others, not repeating their narratives without need. But, as already shown, it does apparently make one indirect allusion to the Virgin Birth. St. Paul's Epistles are silent not only as to the Virgin Birth but as to nearly all of our Lord's earthly life. Does this mean that he was ignorant of it all? The only reason that would have necessitated reference to the Virgin Birth, supposing the silent writers were aware of it, is the existence of controversy concerning it; and of such controversy there is no trace.

It is of course quite possible that the earliest books of the New Testament were written in ignorance of the Virgin Birth, that is, before its publication. All that this would prove is that such publication was delayed—*not at all that the story was contrary to fact.* That the publication was delayed until some time after the establishment of the Christian Church seems certain to many scholars. And the delay was wise. The story could only provoke scandalous misconstruction, unless its recipients had come to understand that Christ's birth in any case was the entrance into human history of a preëxistent heavenly Person. Only from such a standpoint would the story be taken seriously and accepted as

credible. But this delay, and the previous ignorance involved, invalidates the misleading argument that the New Testament supports two traditions, the earlier one making Joseph the begetter of Jesus, and the later one asserting the Virgin Birth; and that it justifies our choice of either one.[8] What it really shows is that an earlier and ignorant assumption—not tradition—was corrected, when this could safely be done, by those in a position to know the facts. It is the wisely delayed story of the well-informed, rather than the previous natural although mistaken assumption of the ignorant, that has the *support* of the New Testament.

(2) This delay in publication, and this previous ignorance of the facts outside the holy family, also wholly nullifies the alleged evidential force of the passages in the Gospels in which Jesus is referred to as the son of Joseph, and Joseph is designated as his father and parent.[9] The Gospel writers show their truthfulness in faithfully reproducing the language employed during our Lord's life, usually without corrective phrase. So they report the words referred to without thereby being committed to acceptance of their alleged implication. Moreover,

[8] *Creeds and Loyalty*, p. 63.

[9] Cf. (*a*) St. Luke iv. 22; St. John i, 45; vi, 42: (*b*) St. Luke ii, 48: (*c*) St. Luke ii, 27, 41.

Jesus was the adopted son of Joseph, even though not begotten of him, and established custom would cause this relationship to be indicated by such terms as have been mentioned. And this applies within the family. In speaking to Jesus, His mother would inevitably refer to Joseph as "Thy father": and St. Luke naturally speaks of Joseph and Mary as "His parents." Why, in view of his clear account of the Virgin Birth elsewhere, should he have stopped to explain that Joseph was only *foster*-father, "parent" in a merely putative and legal sense?

(3) The fact that Christ's mother showed amazement at words and doings of her Son which would have seemed justified to her, if she had realized who and what He was,[10] is said to show that she could not have been aware of His being born of her without earthly paternity. Two simple considerations fully meet this objection. Modernists themselves supply one of them when they insist that the fact of the Virgin Birth, if fact, could not of itself establish the doctrine of Christ's divine Person. If it does not do so for modern intellectuals, why should it have done so for that unsophisticated Maiden? The second consideration is that the language by which the Angel is reported to have

[10] St. Luke ii, 33, 48–50.

announced to Mary her high privilege contains no such exposition of the holy Child's Person as would prepare her for what she was subsequently to hear and witness. He gave her no Christological lecture. How could her untrained mind have obtained *ab initio* the discerning standpoint which the Apostles were unable to gain until after the Resurrection and the Holy Spirit's descent? Of course, she wondered!

(4) Two of our Cambridge Professors raise the remarkable objection that St. Paul's doctrine of Christ's preëxistence in heaven before His earthly life is "incompatible with the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke. In these He *comes into being* (italics mine) through union of the Holy Spirit and His virgin mother." [11] The question arises: In what terms does either of the Virgin Birth narratives describe Christ's birth as His coming into being? I can find no trace therein, whether explicit or implicit, of any assertion or denial which bears specifically on the point. The only basis I can imagine for the argument is the assumption that to be conceived and born at all is equivalent to coming into being, whatever may be the rank in being of the person concerned. Such an assumption precludes acceptance of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. It also puts St. Paul at issue

[11] *Creeds and Loyalty*, pp. 61, 78.

with himself, for he affirms both the preëxistence of Christ and His being born of a woman.[12]

(5) The alleged derivation of the story from pagan myth is incredible. It is based on analogies which on scrutiny reveal violent contrasts both of contents and between foulness and purity. Moreover, the primitive Christians abhorred pagan mythology. The narratives are obviously Jewish in source, and no Jewish myth can be found that could have suggested them. Finally, they were produced too soon after the event to be due to Christian myth-forming, a thing also quite foreign to early Christian tendencies.

(6) Harnack, the great Liberal, rejects the myth theory, but explains the origin of the story as due to belief in the divine sonship of Christ, which led Christians to find a prediction of His Virgin Birth in Isaiah's prophecy that a young woman should bring forth a son who should be called Emmanuel, the Hebrew for "young woman" being translated "virgin" in the Greek version used by early Christians.[13]

The word in question does not *itself mean* "virgin," although thus applicable; and the interpretation in the first Gospel cannot be established *on that ground.* But was it really erroneous?

[12] Phil. ii, 6–7; Gal. iv, 4.
[13] *Hist. of Dogma,* vol. I, p. 100 n.

There are plausible reasons for thinking that it was not. But I have no space to discuss the question, nor is it necessary in determining the fact of the Virgin Birth. Granting for argument's sake that it was erroneous, the Gospel writer's exegetical inexpertness affords no *evidence* that his acquaintance with the manner of Christ's birth was at fault. Inasmuch as the passage cited had not previously been taken as messianic at all, it appears far more likely that his previous knowledge of the fact of the Virgin Birth explains his then novel interpretation of Isaiah than that his belief in the fact of such birth was due to the interpretation in question. His mistaken exegesis, if it was mistaken, affords no evidence against his competence as witness to a comparatively recent fact.

(7) It is objected that the genealogies given in connection with the birth narratives, in spite of the adjustment of certain phrases in them to agree with these narratives, trace our Lord's descent from David through Joseph, and therefore imply in their whole construction that Joseph begat Jesus, a fact actually asserted in certain ancient manuscripts of the first Gospel.

Answering the last point first, the accepted text of St. Matthew i. 16 has uncial and other manuscript support which in textual criticism of the rest of the New Testament is taken by experts to

be decisive. The exceptions are not only exceptions, but seem to be due to alterations made with purpose. There is no space here for details.[14] But it is significant that the altered readings retain the mention of Mary *the Virgin.* Why this unusual mention of the mother, with her being described as "the Virgin"? It is also to be noted that in the Matthæan genealogy the word "begat" is used conventionally for "was legally succeeded by." The proof of this is that in several cases a man is said to have begotten one who was really not his son, but either a more remote descendant or his nephew.

The obvious purpose of the genealogies was to show that Jesus was heir of David's royal line. Such succession was necessarily through a male line, in this case through Joseph, of whom Christ was legal successor whether begotten of him or not. That Mary was also of Davidic ancestry was believed in the early Church, but whether rightly or not does not bear on the question as to whether Jesus was the heir of David. That was determined by the status of his foster-father, which the genealogies are concerned to show. Accordingly, the genealogies are rightly to be regarded as consistent with the Virgin Birth narrative in structure as well as

[14] Good treatments of this text occur in W. C. Allen's *Commentary, in loc.* (*Internat. Crit'l Commentaries*); and F. C. Burkitt's *Evangelion da Mapharreshe,* vol. II, pp. 258 ff.

in their turns of phrase explicitly agreeing with it.

(8) The general accuracy of St. Luke as historian has been successfully vindicated against attack; but the objection is made that he leaves no room for the events connected with our Lord's infancy as given by the first Gospel, the flight to Egypt, etc. From the nature of the case, the additional data needed for compiling a harmony of the two Gospels in this direction are no longer available. The problems of reconciliation therefore cannot be met except conjecturally. But St. Luke's habit elsewhere of giving events in rapid succession without mention of intervals of time between them appears to open up reasonable possibilities of reconciliation.[15] It is clear in any case that our inability to construct a complete harmony of the two Gospels in their early chapters affords no evidence of the falsity of their accounts of the Virgin Birth, for between these accounts at least no shadow of contradiction appears.

(9) Finally, there is the objection, ostensibly based upon scientific grounds, that such an event as the Virgin Birth is *contra-naturam,* as the late Dr. Sanday put it, a contradiction of natural law, and too incredible to be established by the testimony upon which the traditional belief rests.

As I have shown elsewhere that science does not

[15] *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?* by Sir Wm. Ramsay is very helpful.

at all determine the possibility or credibility of miracles, especially when they have an intelligible place in the divine drama at large, I need not add much at this point. That the Virgin Birth does have significant relatedness to history at large is sufficiently shown elsewhere. The only plausible reason for regarding it as especially contrary to nature is the supposed violence of its innovation upon the universally observed method of human procreation. An obvious answer, already given elsewhere, is that our Lord's birth was not an instance of human procreation at all, but was the taking of our nature by a preëxistent divine Person. That such an event would conform in all respects to the law of human procreation is neither demonstrable nor likely; and that its nonconformity to such law is a "violation" thereof is certainly untrue, for the event is other than those to which the law in question properly applies.

Then as to the violence which a virgin birth is said to do to the natural order, this is wrongly estimated. Parthenogenesis, although unknown in human procreation, is a well established phenomenon in certain lower species. That is, it is *not contrary to the natural order at large.* What nature itself does in enabling single organisms to bring forth progeny without male assistance, the operation of the Holy Spirit did in enabling the blessed Mary to

conceive without male action. That is, the physical miracle was limited to supplementing her virgin-power that she might supply to the preëxistent Son of God the nature of her race. In this no violence was done to nature; but a manner of Incarnation was adopted which was brought as closely into line with nature's normal working as was fitting in view of the unique character and purpose of the mystery —a critical shifting of scenery in God's world-drama.

I think that I have reckoned sufficiently with modern objections to the Virgin Birth to make it clear that, whatever incidental problems they may raise, they furnish not a particle of "evidence" against its being a fact. All the evidence is for the fact, and it is enough to convince those whose minds have not been closed by question-begging presuppositions.

5. *Importance*

Modernists tell us that, even if the Virgin Birth be a fact, its importance is not such as to justify its being regarded as an article of faith necessary to be accepted by loyal Christians. Confessedly it was not part of the original preaching of the Apostles, and was not made by them a basis of belief in the Incarnation. Why then, it is asked, do conserva-

tives show such alarm at its denial? What matters our opinion as to the Virgin Birth, so long as we are loyal to Jesus Christ? Why emphasize the fact in question so insistently? Is not Bishop Gore right in calling the fact "secondary?"

It is well to point out first that when Bishop Gore called the fact "secondary" he did not mean unimportant. We have his testimony to the contrary. He obviously had its apologetical relation in view. It is "secondary" as not being the basis of belief in Christ; but is important, none the less, for various reasons. Some of these reasons ought to be perceived even by the Modernists, while others become especially apparent when the fact and significance of the Virgin Birth are accepted and understood. The present emphasis by conservatives does not represent disproportion of view, but is plainly due to Modernist attacks. The subject is not normally dwelt upon to any great extent, even by the most convinced believers in the fact and its importance. It is not often preached about.

(*a*) Modernists are inconsistent in disparaging its importance;[16] for if it is so unimportant as they

[16] Professor Dun of Cambridge, *Creeds and Loyalty*, p. 68, says of those who believe that there is "overwhelming historical evidence for the Virgin Birth" that they "must adjust their whole view of life to include that fact." "And the presumption would be that so exceptional event . . . must possess a like exceptional significance." Again on p. 69, "It is

claim, why are they so deeply concerned with it? Why do they ransack the New Testament for contrary evidence, and proceed to assail the Church for retaining it in the Creed, at the obvious cost of unsettling many believers and saddening those whom God has not willed to be sad? They did not have to do this. If they had simply ignored the subject in their preaching and writing they would have incurred no difficulty; and their avowed belief in the right of symbolical interpretation would have served to prevent disturbance of their own consciences.

(*b*) They would no doubt answer that others are troubled, and that they are contending for the relief of consciences of earnest Christians. Alas, who troubled these others by public attack on the Virgin Birth, unless the Liberals and Modernists of our day?

(*c*) If it is replied that truth is paramount, and that truth-seeking, regardless of mind-closing dogma, is involved, then why is the truth as to the Virgin Birth decried as unimportant? It is just because truth is paramount that conservative believers defend what they have reason to believe is true as against attack. A man's faith determines his practical ideals and actions. Moreover, in view of the

an event which will be believed or doubted or disbelieved according to the whole view of things with which the evidence is approached." Surely such an event is not rightly treated as unimportant.

Modernist emphasis upon scientific scholarship, what scientific justification is there for treating the method of the Incarnation as a fact of negligible importance? Does any competent scientist thus treat even the smallest fact incidental to his investigation of great matters? Modernists acknowledge the epoch-making importance of the birth of Christ. Is it scientific scholarship that leads them to disparage the importance of the circumstances of so great an event? Is not their disparagement, in view of their great labour in attack on the Virgin Birth, a bit inconsistent?

(*d*) The conservative believer has sound reasons for his belief in the importance of the Virgin Birth. Having sufficient evidence for it, he perceives that it is God's chosen method of sending His Son into the world; and he is unable to think that such choice has no meaning and no importance. He believes in divine wisdom.

(*e*) This is confirmed by the fitness of such a method of Incarnation—a method unforeseen of men, and therefore precluding invention by its narrators; but one which, once made known, was perceived to be convenient. The Incarnation was preeminently God's act. Therefore, the birth through which it came to pass was not left to human contingencies, to the will of a man, but was accomplished specifically by God's Holy Spirit. This

method also fittingly signalized the new start, the break with previous human sin, which the Incarnation represents. In short the Virgin Birth has the importance of manifesting the wisdom of God in a great act.

(*f*) Once established as fact, the Virgin Birth constitutes the concrete picture of the Incarnation, the picture by which human imagination is enabled to retain it graphically in mind. This affords needed help to the mass of believers in attaining a vital apprehension of the mystery. For it is a law of human psychology that beliefs in abstract propositions, if they are not embodied in appropriate concrete facts, and thus made imaginable, cannot obtain effective and abiding hold upon human minds in general. Naturally, therefore, to throw doubt upon the pictorial form in which the fact of the Incarnation has been transmitted, a form attested by Scripture as of divine ordering, is viewed with alarm by believers, as tending to weaken faith in the Incarnation.

(*g*) That doubt as to the Virgin Birth does weaken this faith is a commonly observed fact. Those who reject a real Virgin Birth are found sooner or later to lose hold on the doctrine of the Incarnation itself, ending either in denial or in modifying significantly its scriptural and historical content. This has been shown elsewhere. It is quite

true that the knowledge of the fact was not needed to create or establish apostolic belief in Christ's divine Person, for the primitive Church had peculiar advantages in rightly apprehending Him. But for subsequent generations the "sign" of the Virgin Birth, published before the Apostles passed away, became an important *confirmatory* evidence that the birth of Jesus was the coming of the preëxistent Son of God into the world—not an instance simply of human procreation.

(*h*) To-day belief in the Virgin Birth gains new importance from the reasons which really explain its rejection. It is rejected not because of any new data against it, not because of superior scholarship in those who reject it, but because of question-begging presuppositions—naturalism and a reduced Christology. So the battle is one of radically opposed standpoints, the Modernist and the historically Christian; and the fact of the Virgin Birth is for the moment of peculiar importance as a Christian citadel which is under immediate attack.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

1. *The Christian Doctrine*

THE doctrine on this subject that has always been preserved in the Church as an integral part of the Christian faith—indeed as a major premise of Christian apologetic—requires two affirmations: (*a*) that Christ rose from the dead in the body wherein He died; (*b*) that His body underwent a great change. St. Paul's description of our resurrection implies that from having been a *psychical* body, under the rule of the animal soul, it became a *pneumatical* body, under the control of the higher soul or spirit. St. Paul's description is of course partial; but it makes clear the essential element in the change, which is a putting on of incorruption and immortality, and an equipment of the body for the functions of the future life.

The creeds simply affirm with regard to Christ's Resurrection that "the third day He rose again from the dead," this being the initial fact, unreserved acceptance of which leads men's minds on to full ac-

knowledgment of the whole mystery. In saying "the third day," the creeds indicate *an event* that occurred many hours after He was dead; and in adding, "He rose again from the dead," it describes this event as *His recovery* from the state of death in which during those hours He lay in the tomb. The opinion that Christ's personality survived the shock of death, and lives on in the other world, plainly does not, without important enlargement, measure up to acceptance of this affirmation. On the other hand, the context of "pious opinion" which has been gathered around this article, and around that which concerns our own resurrection, is not part of the faith which loyal Christians must accept. It stands or falls on its merits, and has undergone much change. Failure to realize this has led Modernists into very gross caricature of the Catholic doctrine; and a correction of their misconstructions, sufficiently weighed, will go far to reduce the plausibility of their arguments in this subject.

2. *Modern Reaction*

As with the Virgin Birth so here, the modern attacks on the bodily Resurrection of Christ have been due to an opposition of standpoints, not to better scholarship. There is an immense amount of high scholarship enlisted in behalf of the Christian

doctrine.[1] It is very generally the case that those who reject the fact of bodily resurrection approach the question with the presuppositions which account in most instances for rejection of the Virgin Birth: that of naturalism, and that of reduced Christology. To these may be added a third, a Manichæan or semi-Manichæan belief in the essential unfitness of matter for the spiritual functions and self-expression of the other world. For Naturalism the event in question is impossible, and a negative conclusion is inevitable regardless of any alleged evidence. And if Christ was not truly divine in the ancient Christian sense of that term, His recovery from bodily death seems unlikely, incredible, and the apostolic assertion that He could not be holden of death [2] will either be dismissed or given an interpretation contrary to its apostolic meaning. If matter is intrinsically unfitted for the functioning of the life to come, the resurrection of the body is of course incredible.

With such presuppositions men have necessarily either rejected the evidence of those who testified to the empty tomb and to Christ's bodily manifestations to His disciples or have sought to explain the facts attested on other grounds than that of a true

[1] One of the best recent treatises is W. J. Sparrow Simpson's *The Resurrection and Modern Thought.* I have discussed the subject in *The Passion and Exaltation of Christ,* chs. vi–viii.

[2] Acts ii, 24.

bodily resurrection. It is out of question for me to treat in this volume of the many forms of attack and substitutionary theories that have emerged. One after another they have been adequately reckoned with and sufficiently answered by Christian scholars, who have incidentally relieved the doctrine of crudities born of extraneous opinion and utilized by assailants to discredit the real doctrine at issue. The latest explanation of assailants is the so-called psychic theory, that the appearances were spiritistic materializations given to assure the Apostles that their Master was living on in the spirit world. Like the "telegram-from-heaven" theory which preceded it, this presupposes deception, for the words of the risen one plainly imply His possession of flesh and bones.[3] It was assertion of His bodily resurrection that constituted the primary basis in apostolic preaching of their argument for His Person. It is also clear that no spiritistic phenomena known to history even approximate those described in connection with the Resurrection.

3. *Matter and Spirit*

That in our present fallen state the flesh always lusteth contrary to the spirit[4] is a fact of daily ex-

[3] St. Luke xxiv, 39–43.
[4] Gal. v, 17.

perience. But, as St. Paul points out, this is a passing subjection to vanity which is to end in "redemption of the body." [5] And St. Paul's contrast between the natural body (the Greek is *psychic* or soul body) and the spiritual body [6] is not one of substance as between matter and spirit. It is of subjection, on the one hand, to the carnal or animal soul, and, on the other hand, to the higher spirit. If he says that flesh and blood cannot inherit (they cannot of their native power), he goes right on to say that by a change at the last trump this mortal will put on immortality.[7] Modernists quote the "cannot" and fail to reckon with what follows. What native power cannot do a change from above is said to bring about.

The Christian doctrine does not at all involve a crude resuscitation of flesh in the sense of restoration to its previous state and limitations, but its emancipation from limitations, suitable for the stage of probation although to be transcended hereafter as unsuitable for the life in glory. We should not confuse two uses of the word "flesh": that which simply designates the lower part of our nature; and that which has reference to its present carnal limi-

[5] Rom. viii, 20–23.
[6] I Cor. xv, 44.
[7] I Cor. xv, 50 ff.

tations. It is in the first sense, of course, that the risen Lord drew attention to His flesh.

Modernist science is not invariably the most modern. The tendency of science to-day is to reduce matter in ultimate analysis to electrical phenomena. This theory is too recent for its bearing on our subject to be fully developed. But plainly, if it is true, it reduces to ineptitude much current argument as to the impossibility that glorified spirits should find use for material bodies. We have to remember that in this world our use of matter is its use by spirits; and if in our present weakness we can to a degree subject it to our spiritual ends, why should the enhancement of spiritual power promised to faithful servants of Christ deprive them of ability to subject and use the body? [8]

I need not proceed further on these lines. It is sufficient to remind my readers that as with the Virgin Birth this controversy is a battle between standpoints; and that the presuppositions that explain the Modernist rejection of our Lord's bodily Resurrection are not defensible on either scientific or Christian grounds. Much might be added, if I had space, on the wider bearings and relations of

[8] Which is most materialistic, to think of the body as "too much for" the spirit to handle, as moderns are apt to do, or to believe that the perfected spirit can master and use the body for its higher ends? Surely the former.

the bodily Resurrection to the world drama at large and to other Christian doctrines, relations that add greatly to the credibility of the doctrine. The habit of viewing the Resurrection exclusively as an *evidential* miracle necessarily weakens the hold of many on its reality.

THE END